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GIANT LINERS of the NORTH ATLANTIC

by Frank A. Munsey

THE March MUNSEY contained an article of mine on the giant hotels of New York, and while developing the subject it occurred to me that I might well say something about the giant liners of the North Atlantic by way of comparison, for these great new boats are as well

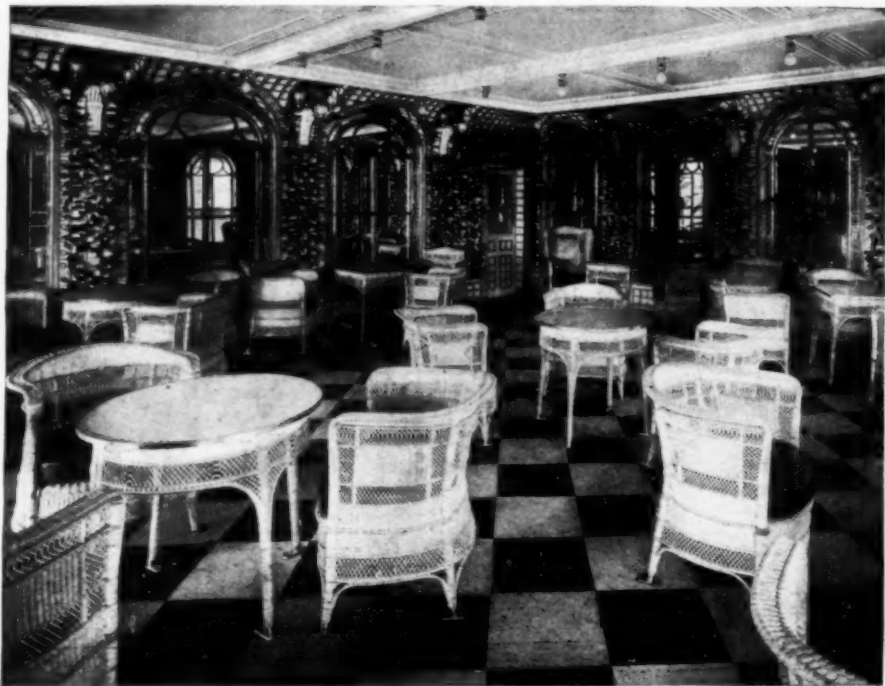
great palace hotels, with all the luxuries and comforts of those ashore.

Of course the liners have no better rooms than the hotels of New York, but they have just as good rooms and they are much better ventilated. In my hotel article I made the statement that rooms on the lee side of a house, hotel or dwelling, though they had an outside window,



A CHARACTERISTIC CHAIN OF STEAMER CHAIR LOUNGERS

From a photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.



A CORNER IN ONE OF THE VERANDA CAFÉS OF THE OLYMPIC

were not properly ventilated and urged that they should be ventilated from the roof by means of pipes constantly bringing fresh air to them, as is the case with the inside rooms and those below the water-line on shipboard.

The outside rooms on a ship, those far enough above the water so that the ports, or windows, may remain open, are ventilated through these, and as a matter of fact they are not the best ventilated rooms on the ship. Those on the lee side of the boat get no better circulation of air than rooms on the lee side of any building on land, while the inside rooms and those below the water-line are constantly supplied with fresh air forced down through pipes from the hurricane deck.

The general impression is that inside rooms are bound to be stuffy places, but the fact is that they are the best ventilated rooms on the ship as rooms average. Of course the ventilation on the wind side of a ship is perfect, but unfortunately the wind does business on only one side of the ship at a time. Through meeting the necessity of ventilating interior rooms on

shipboard marine architects have pointed the way for the intelligent ventilation of hotels and private houses.

In point of comforts and luxuries and spaciousness the best hotel ashore cannot equal the modern liner, with its lounges, its library, its palm garden, its tea room, its smoking room, its sun parlor, its sun deck, and its promenade decks. There is nothing on land in any sense comparable.

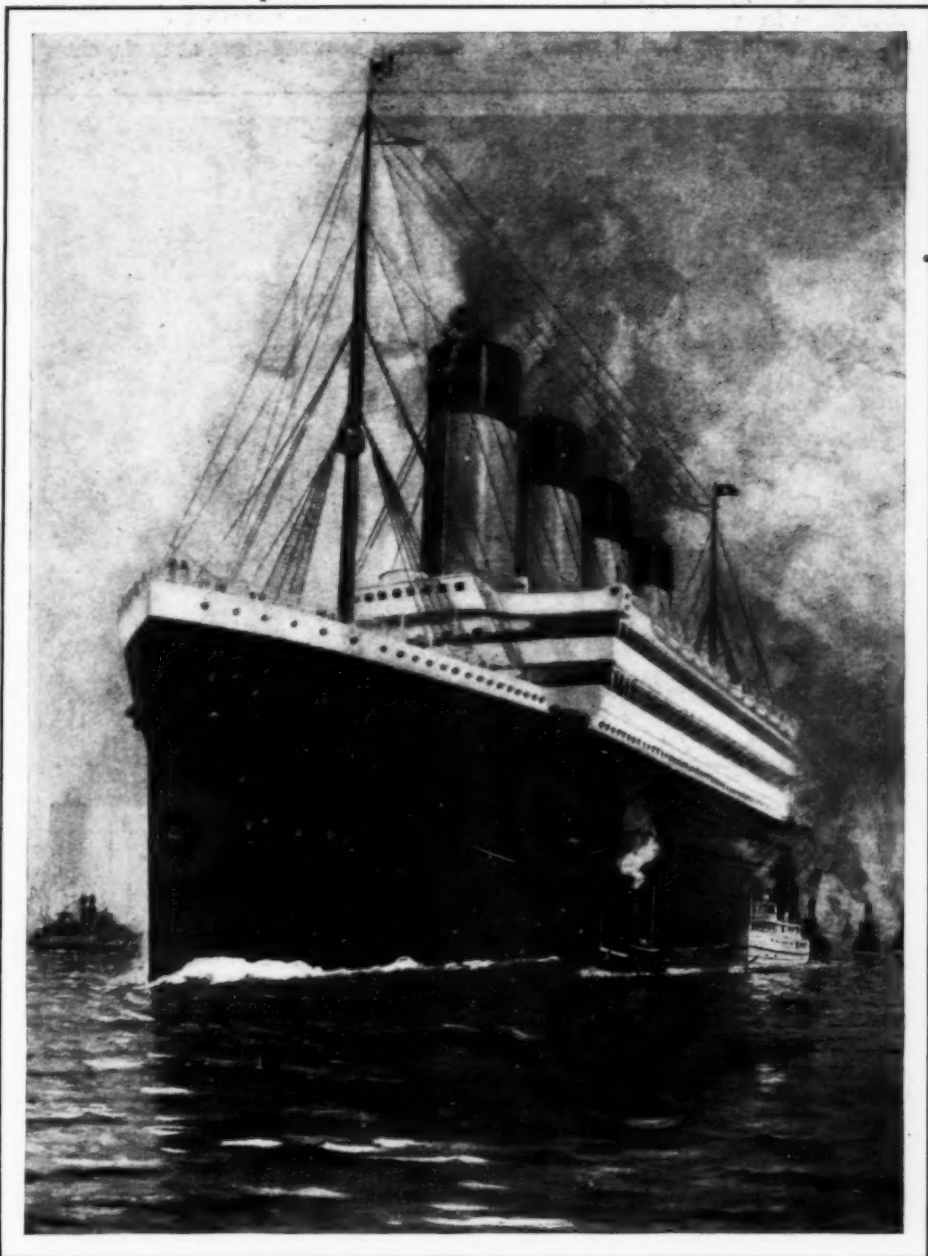
Hotels in New York or in any other big city at best are more or less hemmed in by other buildings and are set in an atmosphere surcharged with smoke and dust and impurities. The Atlantic liner on the other hand, has its setting in God's pure air. Moreover, the liner is in a sense a holiday craft, a great, vast playground where every one relaxes from care and takes on a holiday spirit.

A day at sea is a thing apart from a day on shore. A delicious salt bath on getting up in the morning in bathroom or swimming pool. Then dress and a brisk constitutional on deck in the fresh sea air, and the day is launched. It is always a lazy morning at sea, some passengers com-

ing on deck with the getting up of the sun, others straggling along all the way to high noon. Early breakfast on shipboard is scantily attended, but by the time sandwiches and bouillon are served on deck at eleven o'clock a goodly number are in

evidence and have their sea appetites with them.

With nothing to do at sea, every one is strangely busy, walking, idling, gossiping, reading, sleeping or playing games. A tiny sail piercing the horizon, a passing



A HEAD-ON VIEW OF THE OLYMPIC JUST PUTTING OUT TO SEA

steamer, an iceberg, a spouting whale, or a school of porpoises racing with the ship—any one of these crowds the rail with passengers and brings a thrill of excitement on board.

The Atlantic Ocean, when you are out in the middle of it, a thousand or fifteen hundred miles from shore, is a mighty big place. How terrifically vast it seems and

Dinner is an animated scene such as you would see in a fashionable New York or London hotel. The meal over, coffee and cigars again, then to the smoking room, where the pool on the run is auctioned off. Meanwhile, some are walking on deck, some writing, some reading, some dancing, others looking on, with groups scattered here and there at cards, chess or



THE BOAT DRILL ON THE KAISER II

From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York

what a weary waste of water! Plowing along for days sometimes without seeing anything but an endless, boundless stretch of sea makes the heart jump at the sight of another boat. It makes the world you left behind you seem nearer and punctuates the monotony of an aimless ocean.

At midday the run is posted, and this is the big milestone of the day. Then luncheon, with a cuisine equal to the best restaurant ashore. After luncheon, coffee and cigars, and a snooze on deck or in cabin, and all too soon tea-time has rolled around, and after tea a brisk walk, and every one walks before dressing for dinner.

other games. Thus the day ends, and in its passing the giant liner has reeled off five or six hundred miles.

No hotel on shore can reproduce a day like this. It isn't within the possibilities. The conditions are not the same. And at sea it is far more than a matter of conditions; it is the consciousness of escape from care and work and worry—something of the same spirit of the caged bird on gaining its freedom.

There is a psychological something that takes possession of a man when the boat pulls away from the pier and points her nose seaward. He finds himself actually



THE FLORIST SHOP OF THE IMPERATOR

From a photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.



THE RITZ RESTAURANT OF THE IMPERATOR

From a photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.



A DECK SCENE ON THE IMPERATOR, ONE OF THE—

From a copyrighted photograph by—



—MANY WAYS OF KILLING TIME AT SEA

—Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.

and mentally cut loose from everything. It is as if he had passed out of the workaday world and into another — a great fairy world with life a mimic life of idleness and play.

This is recreation indeed, a letting go of every burden, a relaxation from the pace that kills. Nowhere on land can the overworked man so completely get away from himself and his cares as on old ocean.

And this psychological influence doesn't desert him the minute the boat docks on a foreign shore. It stays with him and possesses him to a degree that disqualifies him during his holiday for thinking or worrying about his interests at home. His interests fail to interest him. He is not in the mood for work or anything pertaining to work.

This isn't the experience of every business man, but it is the experience of the great preponderance of them who go abroad as regularly as the summer season comes around, to rest up and store up energy for the heavy work of the fall and winter. It is the only way they manage to do the measure of work they do and keep in good form.

Going abroad in the way to get the most out of it is both a habit and a matter of experience. The first time a mature man goes to Europe—the average man—he kicks at everything. He measures everything



LIBRARY OF THE MAURETANIA

by American standards and American methods. In this constant state of mild or aggressive protest and in the more or less irksome task of sightseeing he gets little rest and benefit. To get rest, real rest, one must sag into a situation and accept it and like it.

What does it matter if one does have to tip and tip and tip till he wears out his change pocket if his bills are less by the extent of his gratuities?

The great thing is to accept Europe as we find it and not charge ourselves with the task of making it over.

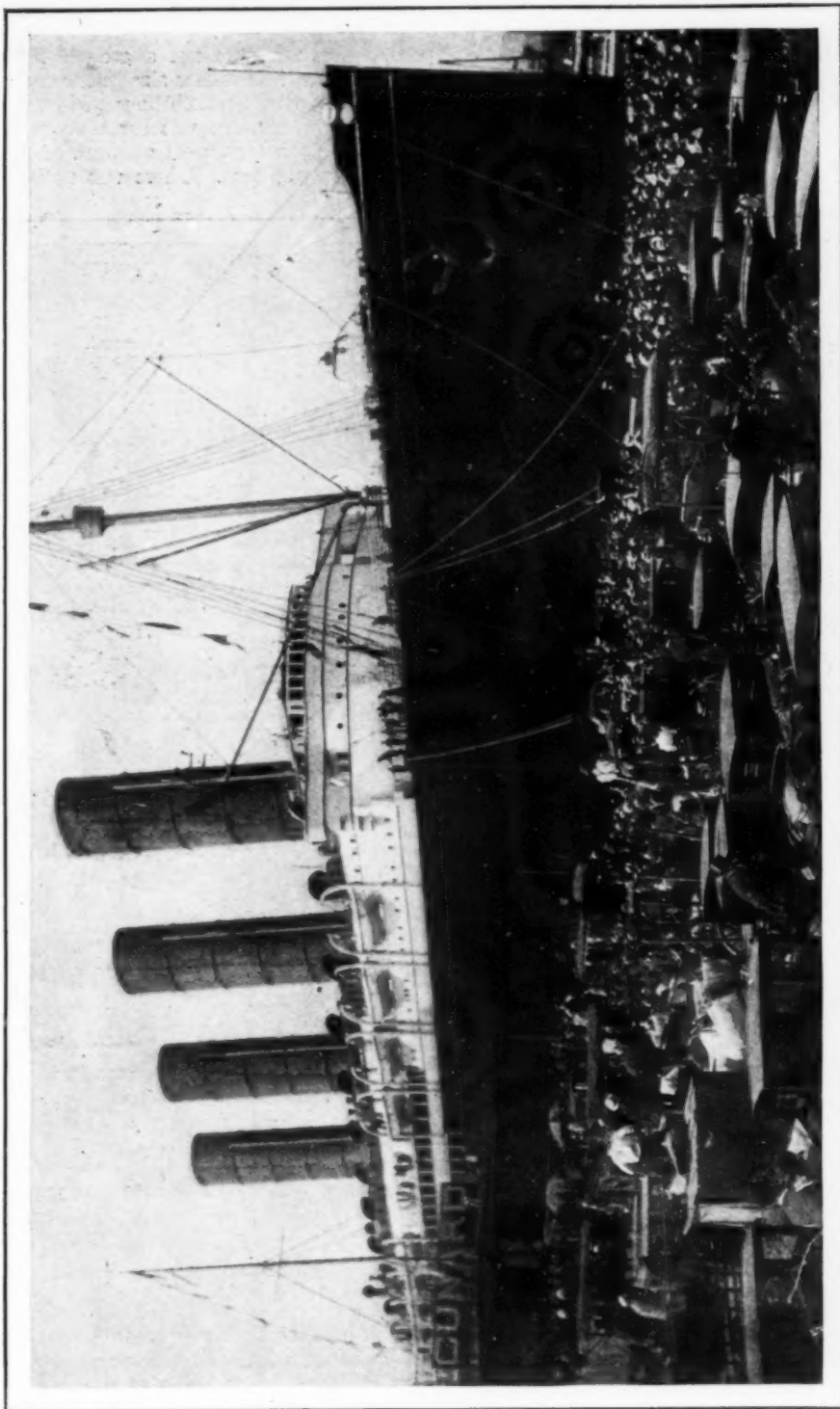
I find, as a rule, that the active American business man must go to Europe half a dozen times before he squares himself to the life over there, and until he does this he does not get the full measure of benefit from his holiday.

It isn't that Europe is any better summer playground than America, but rather that Europe has three thousand miles of Atlantic Ocean between it and ourselves, and that in traversing this vast stretch of water we undergo a mental and psycho-

logical change that fits us to enter into rest and recreation to a degree that is difficult here at home.

Moreover, the human repair shops abroad do a world of good to our overworked, nerve-strained American men and women. At home we as yet have relatively few of these repair shops and those we have are in too close proximity to our counting rooms and the social centers. There is just one right way of going to a "cure," and that is with the thought that you are literally putting yourself in the repair shop. Going into one of these human repair shops in this spirit, you relax in the hands of your doctor and yield gracefully to the regimen of the place. Europeans long ago learned the importance of the human repair shop to which they go or aim to go with annual regularity.

But to return to the ocean liner. There is another side to the picture of sojourning on the bounding deep. It is not one great unbroken calm at sea, one untrammelled joy and delight. There are the dull days and the rough days when time hangs



THE LUSITANIA OF THE CUNARD LINE, ON ARRIVING AT HER PIER IN NEW YORK

From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York

heavy and discomfort makes the passengers sigh to be on land—ready to sell their souls, maybe, to be on land.

These are the days with fogs and storms and raging seas that rob the ocean of all its charm and delights. But bad as they are, they are in a sense worth while as a background to emphasize the glories of a

Our first giant steamship was the Great Eastern, launched in 1859. Unlike her predecessors she was not a growth from one size to a little bigger size but was the crystallization of an ambitious vision.

The Great Eastern was some boat for her day, 19,000 tons, with a length of approximately 700 feet. There was nothing



THE MAIN SALON OF THE CRACK FRENCH LINER, THE FRANCE

From a copyrighted photograph by Byron, New York

bright sunny day. There is nothing comparable to it in all the world, with the deep blue of the heavens and the deep blue of the ocean sparkling in the divine sunlight as the liner speeds onward, leaving its white trail stretching far astern. On such a day, with every one in holiday mood, and thrilled with the joy of living, we get such a picture as no other setting can furnish.

in her class, nothing more than about half her size. But whether due to faulty construction or the skepticism of the period, or that the world wasn't ready for so big a boat, with no docks able to accommodate her, or to some other cause, the Great Eastern was a colossal failure, and the failure of this first mammoth steamship doubtless retarded for many years the incoming of the giant liners of to-day.



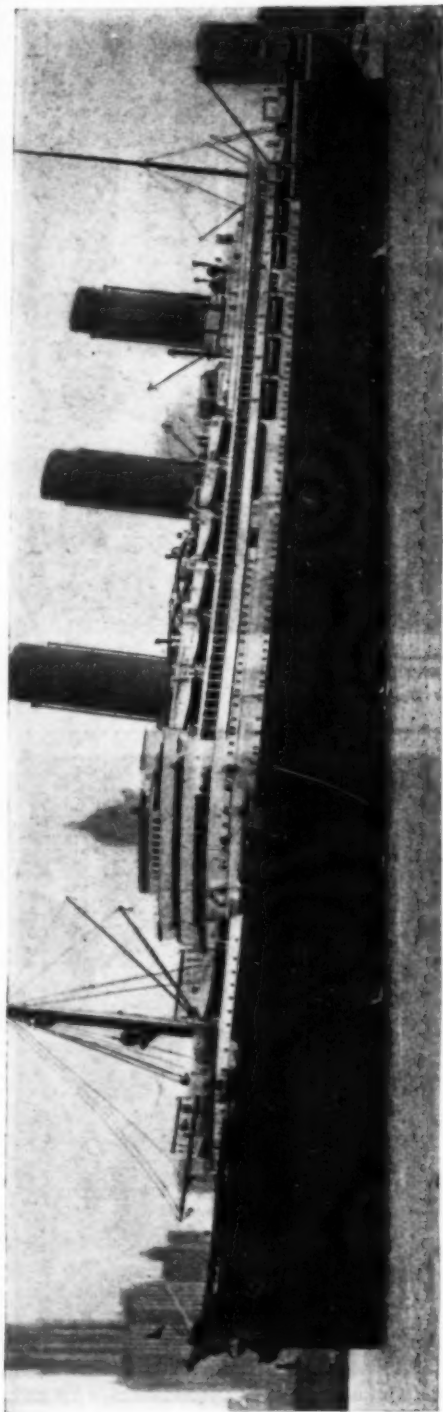
A TEA ROOM CORNER OF THE IMPERATOR

From a photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.



ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME—THE IMPERATOR

From a photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.



THE GIANT IMPERATOR, OF THE HAMBURG-AMERICAN LINE, 919 FEET LONG

From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York

Because of this set-back nothing very startling happened in the steamship world until 1894 when the new *Lucania* of the Cunard Line slashed the crossing record between New York and Queens-town to five days seven hours and twenty-three minutes. The *Lucania* and her sister ship, the *Campania*, were thirteen thousand ton boats, with a length of 620 feet. They recorded an emphatic advance in marine architecture and showed that the hoodoo of the *Great Eastern* had been shaken off for good and all.

But these two ocean fliers of the Cunard Company had but a short reign as queens of the ocean for it was only a few years later when the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse* of the North German Lloyd Company swept into the game and straightway grabbed all the ocean laurels. She was the biggest and fastest and best passenger boat that up to that time the world had ever known, a boat that broke away from conventional types and initiated a new idea in ship construction, a boat with some real comforts and real elegance. The *Kaiser* was a fourteen thousand ton boat with a length of 649 feet.

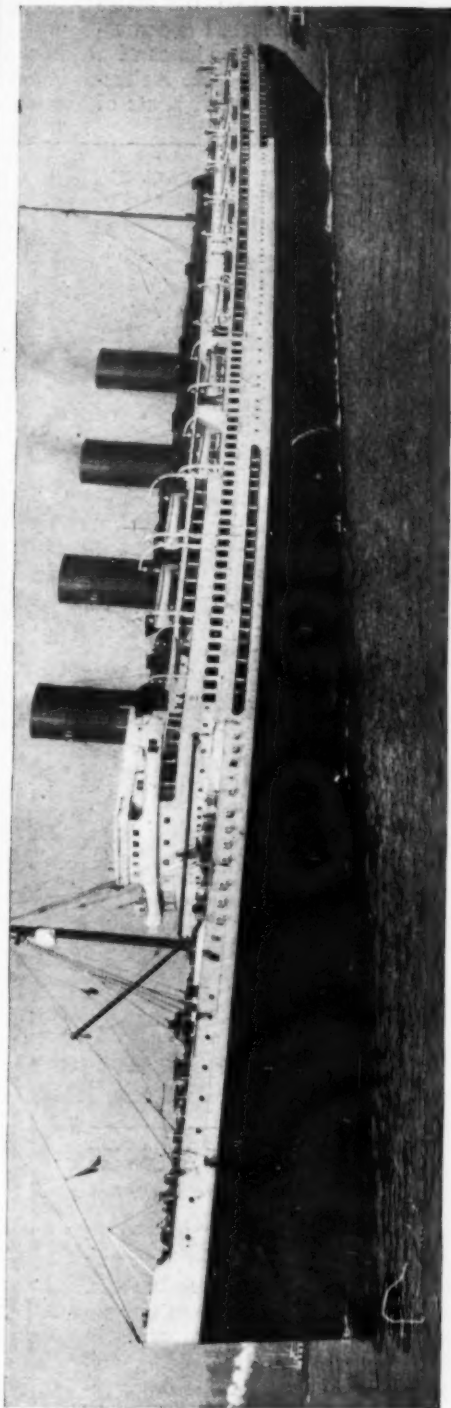
Following close on the heels of the *Kaiser* came the *Deutschland*, another German ship put out by the Hamburg-American Line. The *Deutschland* was slightly larger than the *Kaiser* and distinctly faster. She lost no time in annexing the speed record. The *Deutschland* has since abandoned her fine old name and become the *Victoria Luise* and in giving up her former name she gave up all pretense to speed, her powerful engines having been replaced by a battery of less than half the power. Now this once proud queen of the Atlantic is a tame craft, humiliated, subdued—a mere pleasure yacht, making excursions to the land of the midnight sun in summer and to the land of the summer sun to the south of us in winter.

After the Deutschland the North German Lloyd Company brought out three more steamers of the general type of the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse. The Kronprinz Wilhelm, the Kaiser Wilhelm II, and the Kronprinzessin Cecilie came out in the order named and together with the old Kaiser, form the North German Lloyd's fleet of express steamers sailing weekly between Bremen and New York.

The Kronprinz never distinguished itself for speed, but the Kaiser II was an emphatic improvement on the two previous ships of this line and lifted the record from the Deutschland. The Kronprinzessin Cecilie, almost an exact duplicate of the Kaiser II, is still faster. Both of these boats marked a great step forward in the matter of comforts and luxuries. They introduced the private bath in considerable numbers, and the private bath is as much sought after to-day on shipboard as in our hotels on land.

The next noteworthy development in ship construction took the shape of the palace hotel type, initiated in 1901 by the White Star Line in the Celtic, 20,904 tons. The Celtic was followed in quick succession by the Cedric, 21,035 tons; the Baltic, 23,876 tons, and the Adriatic, 24,541 tons.

And then another crystallization of an ambitious vision came in the great Olympic. As in the case of the Great Eastern which made so great a bound forward in doubling the size of any previous ship, the Olympic at a single bound doubled the size of the biggest liner of her day, her sister ship, the Adriatic. But unlike the Great Eastern, and though more than twice her size, the Olympic at once demonstrated her practicability and great popularity. In her we got the first example of a perfect giant palace liner which was the equal of the giant palace hotels ashore.

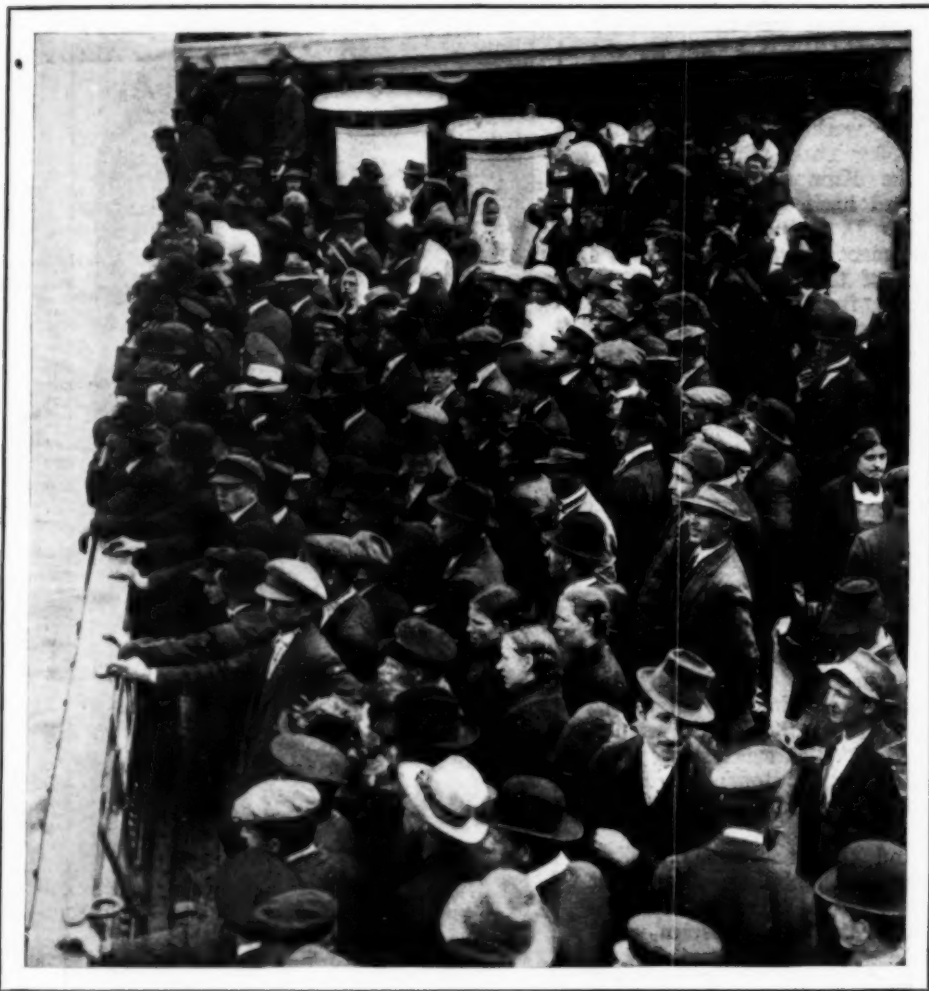


A BROADSIDE VIEW OF THE FRANCE, OF THE FRENCH LINE

From a photograph by Beren, New York

While the White Star Line was developing the palace hotel steamship, the Hamburg-American Line contributed generously to this new idea with its two ships of a similar type, the *Amerika* and the *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria*, respectively, boats of

In the way of fast ships, the Cunard Company came into its own again seven or eight years ago, when it gave us the *Lusitania* and *Mauretania*. These boats immediately got back the speed record from Germany and set a pace that para-



A THRONG OF IMMIGRANTS GETTING THEIR FIRST SIGHT OF NEW YORK HARBOR FROM THE STEERAGE DECK OF AN INCOMING STEAMER—AN EARNEST, HUSKY, HARDY LOOKING LOT OF MEN AND WOMEN

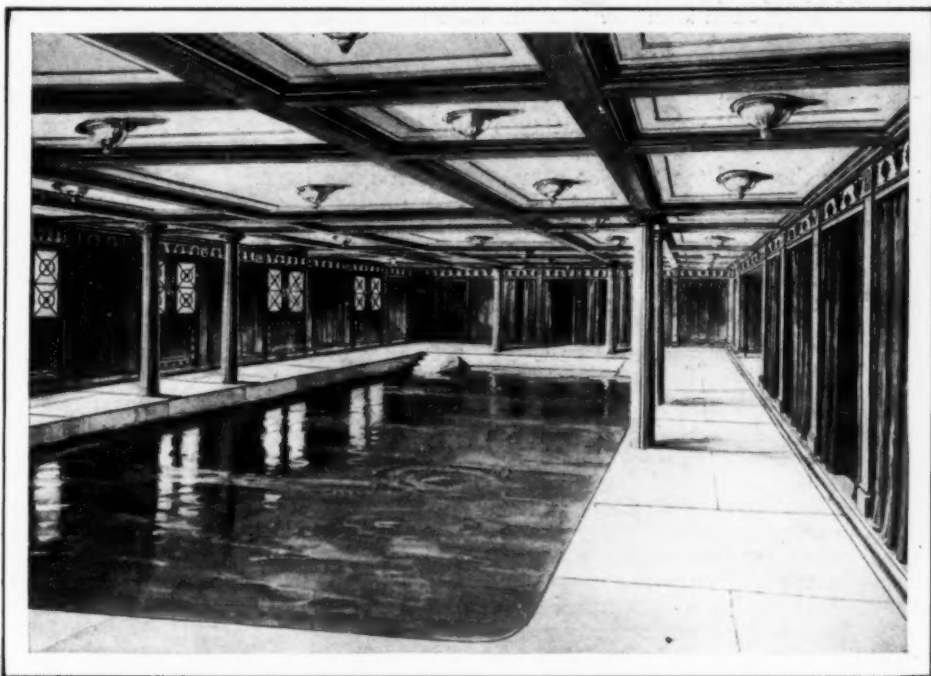
From a photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.

22,000 and 24,000 tons. The Ritz restaurant was introduced in these two liners, as well as many other attractive features. Now all the ships of the fifty thousand ton class have their *à la carte* restaurants in addition to the main dining saloon, and have copied as well some of the other innovations of these German ships.

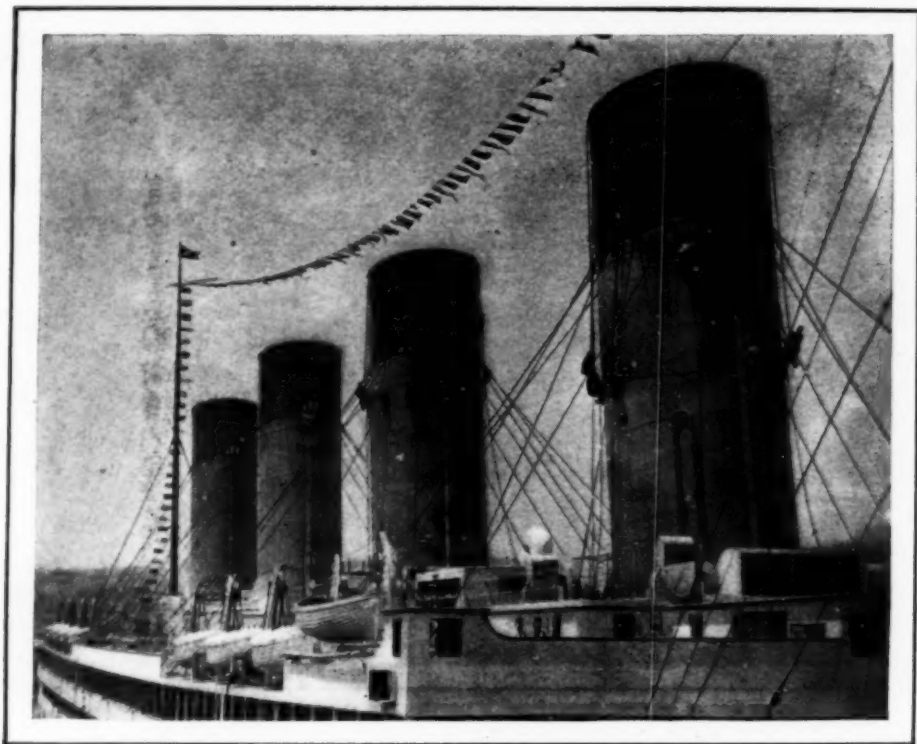
lyzes the ambition of rival lines. These boats are great favorites with the public, and rightly so, because they not only have speed, but in their fittings and spaciousness and general scheme, allowing for the fact that they are of the racehound type, they are superb ships. They are not floating hotels in the sense of the fifty thou-



SAND BOXES ON THE IMPERATOR, A DEVICE FOR AMUSING THE CHILDREN
From a copyrighted photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.



A DRAWING OF THE SWIMMING POOL OF THE AQUITANIA



SAILORS PAINTING THE GREAT FUNNELS OF THE OLYMPIC. THESE FUNNELS ARE BIG ENOUGH TO DRIVE A RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVE AND TRAIN OF CARS THROUGH

From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York

sand ton boats; but they are the very finest examples of the strictly boat type liner.

The fifty thousand ton type, as a matter of fact, is more hotel than boat. It is a thorough boat, however, and is as fast as any on the ocean save the *Mauretania* and *Lusitania*, but its hotel side so overshadows the boat side that the boat side is incidental to the hotel.

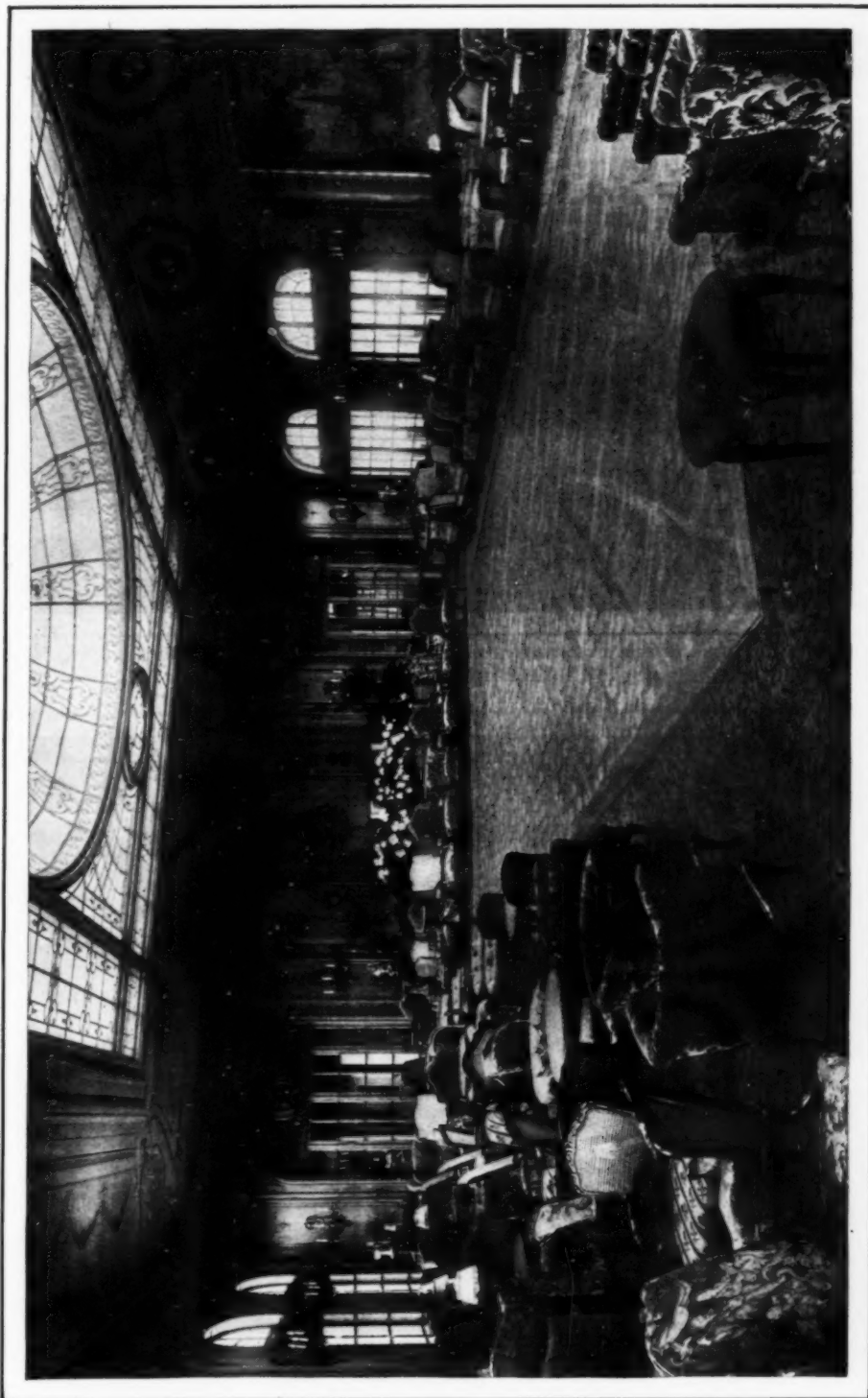
Last year the Hamburg-American Company gave us the wonderful *Imperator*, a palace hotel of the type of the *Olympic*, and in another week or so we shall see over here her sister ship, the *Vaterland*, of even larger size.

Meanwhile, the Cunard Company not content to rest on its speed laurels alone, has entered competition in the fifty thousand ton class with its new mammoth ship, the *Aquitania*, and the White Star Line now has under construction another boat of the fifty thousand ton class, the new *Britannic*.

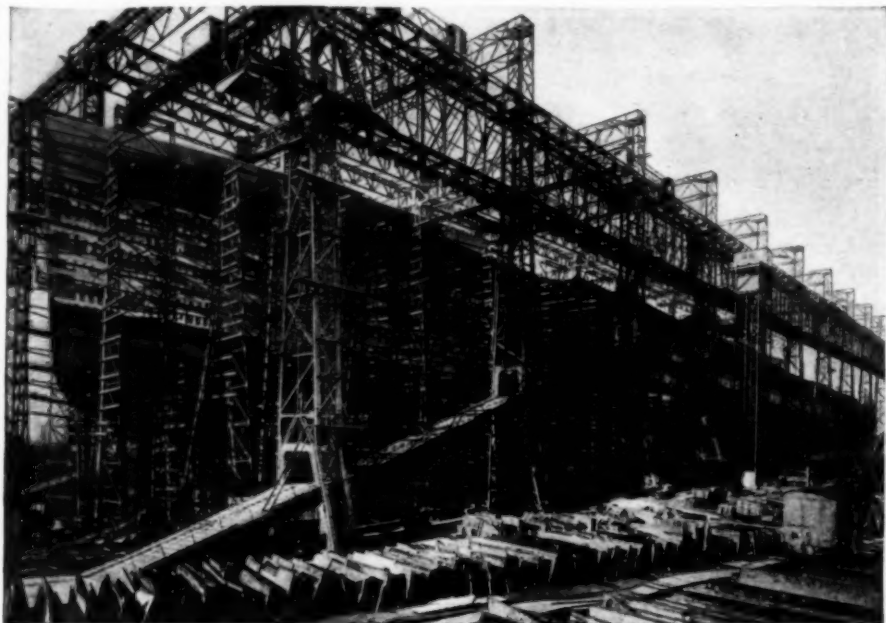
All transatlantic lines are imbued with the spirit of progress. The Holland-America has some very good boats of the Rotterdam type, large, steady, and well appointed. In a general way they are in the class of the *George Washington*, of the North German Lloyd Line, the *Caronia*, of the Cunard Company, and the *Cleveland* of the Hamburg-American Line.

And the French Line has two fine express steamers, the *Provence* and the *France*, the latter only two years in service. The French Line is fast coming into its own with its new boats—boats that speed with the best on the ocean, except for the *Mauretania* and *Lusitania*. And landing its passengers at Havre, so near to Paris has a strong appeal to the traveling public.

The fifty thousand ton boat makes possible a measure of comforts and luxuries that cannot be had in the smaller steamers. Moreover, the fifty thousand ton boat is the only insurance policy



THE LOUNGE OF THE IMPERATOR. THE DISTINGUISHING AND MOST DISTINGUISHED FEATURE OF THE BOAT, STRIPPED FOR ACTION—THAT IS, STRIPPED FOR DANCING



THE NEW BRITANNIC, IN PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION—ANOTHER OF THE FIFTY THOUSAND TON TYPE OF BOATS FOR THE WHITE STAR LINE

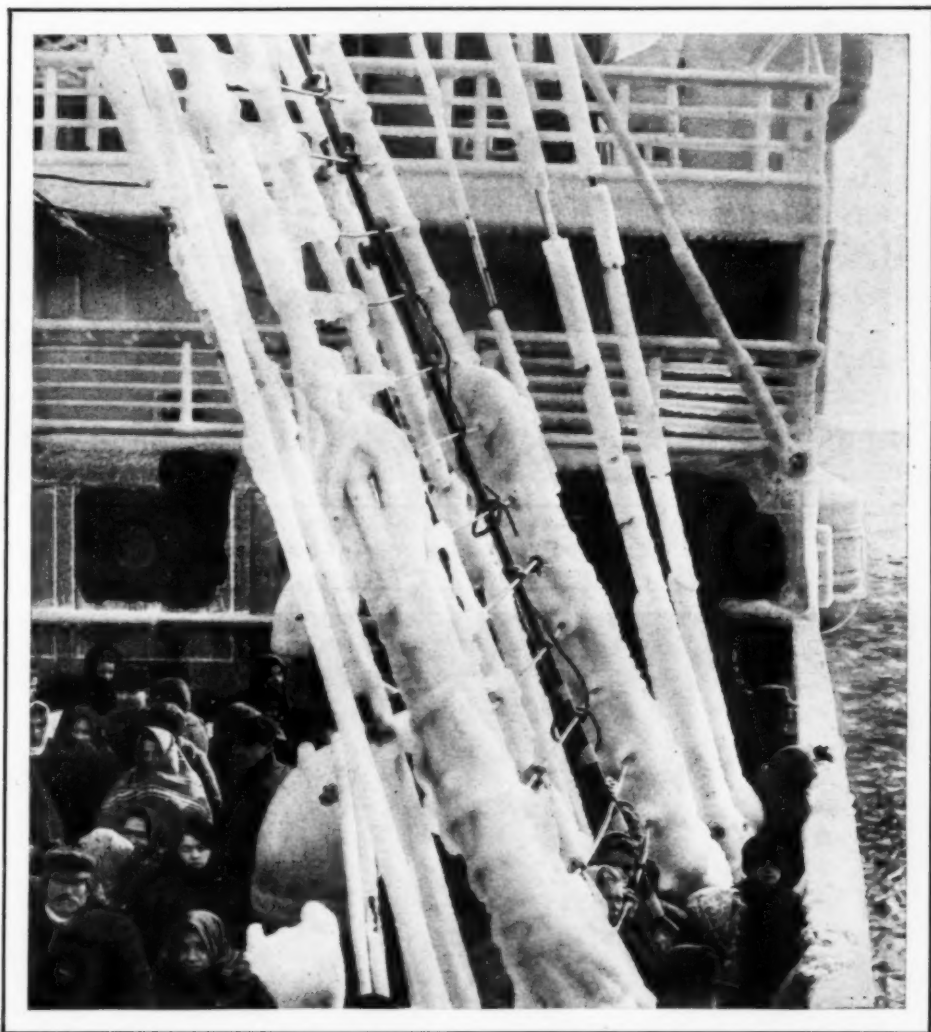


A TYPICAL HIGH GRADE CABIN OF THE OLYMPIC—A FINE BIG SLEEPING ROOM

against seasickness that counts for much. And it isn't a dead sure guarantee, but it comes so close to it that no one need worry much about *mal de mer* on such a boat.

There are times when old ocean, in

old type and the beginning of a new and greater type. A sweep from the twenty thousand ton to the fifty thousand ton boat in something like a dozen years is going some. And it doesn't require great



A TOUCH OF WINTER AT SEA—THE BOAT, THE KRONPRINZESSIN CECILIE, WITH A GROUP OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE FOREGROUND

From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York

angry mood, has things pretty much its own way. But in its ordinary mood, or even in reasonably extraordinary mood, a boat of this size carries itself with becoming dignity.

But the fifty thousand ton boat isn't the end; it is the crowning achievement of the

vision to see in the comparatively near future the seventy-five thousand or even hundred thousand ton boat—a boat measuring fifteen hundred or two thousand feet in length. Boats of this size may never come, but it is more probable that they will than that they will not. Anyway it

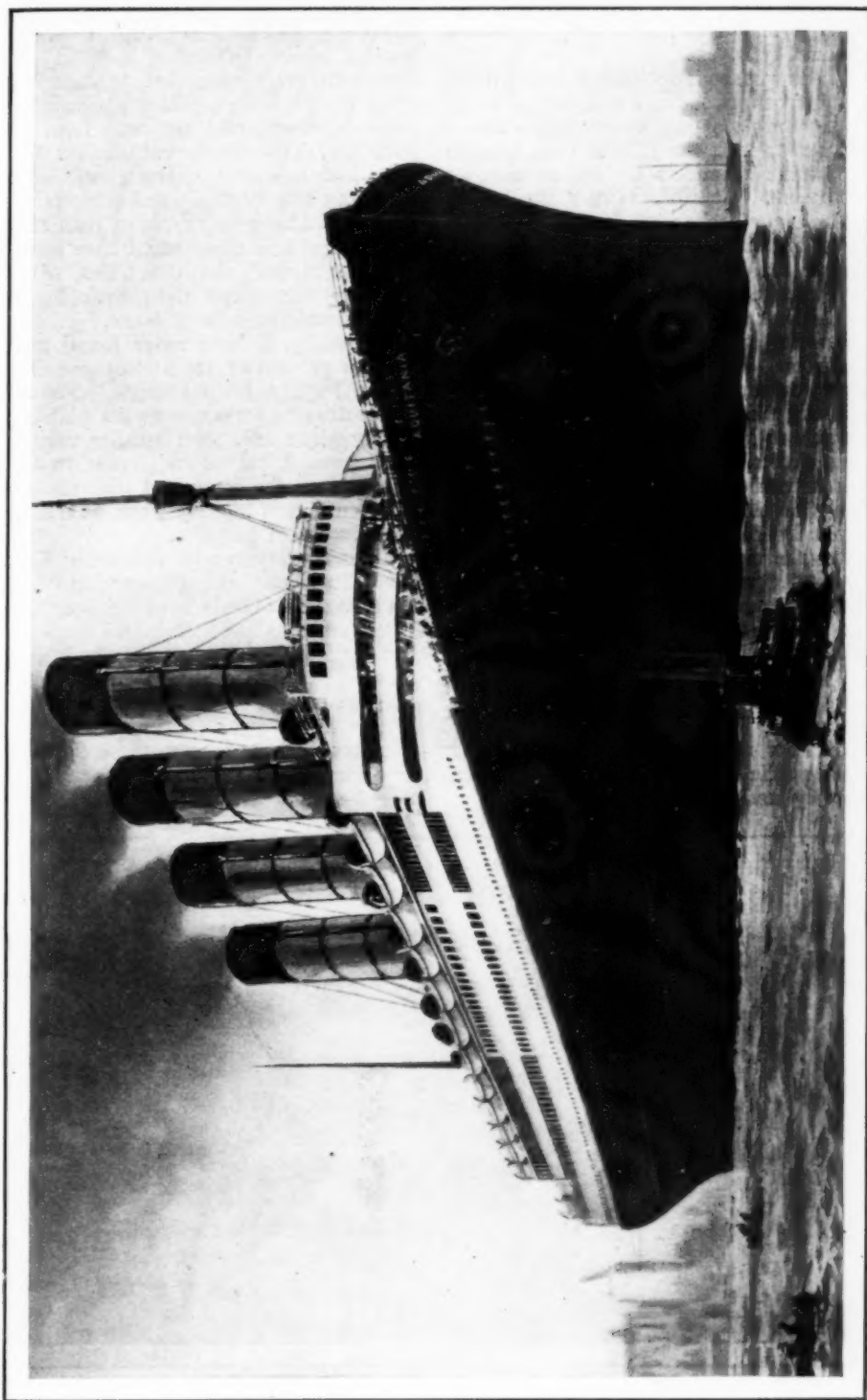


THE ROMAN BATH AND SWIMMING POOL OF THE EMPEROR

From a photograph by Brown & Dawson, Stamford, Conn.



A PORTION OF THE SMOKING ROOM ON THE OLYMPIC



THE NEW GIANT CUNARD, THE AQUITANIA, OF THE FIFTY THOUSAND TON TYPE, WHICH MEANS THE PALACE HOTEL TYPE

is certain that the 50,000 ton boat has come to stay and has already become a standard type.

These observations are gathered from many crossings over the Atlantic ferry. On my first crossing, twenty years ago, I was struck with the lack of consideration by marine architects for the comfort of passengers. The boats were small, and their narrow decks were frequently awash. In bright sunny weather, and with a smooth sea, passengers got on very well, but when it was cold and stormy and rough there was practically nowhere to go. There was, to be sure, a dingy little smoking-room and a long, plain, barnlike dining saloon. Beyond these two rooms and the pinched little cabins there was nowhere to go but out, and the "out" was often denied to passengers.

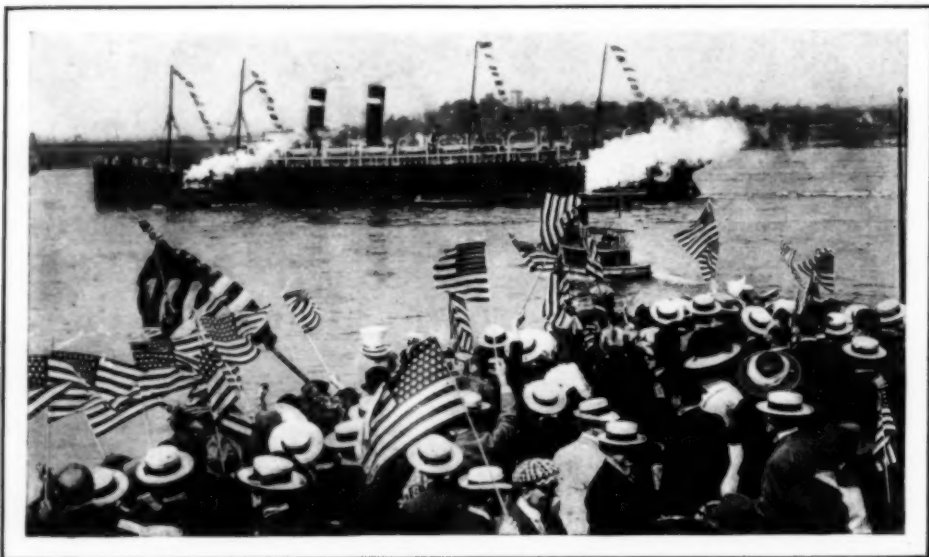
I remember very well, after sizing up things on that first voyage, saying that if I were building a ship to carry passengers across the more or less boisterous Atlantic I would first lay out a big comfortable lounging room in the center of the ship, and around that lounge I would build the ship.

This has all happened, and a vast deal more. The lounge is the lounge of my conception, but in addition the palace hotel liner now gives us dozens of other great public rooms, luxuriously and comfortably and temptingly furnished.

I want to refer again to what I said about going abroad to escape from work here at home. Of course, it doesn't hold true with every man that he cannot get away from his work taking his holiday in America. Some men get away from work naturally, have great aptitude for it, in fact, but this isn't characteristic of the American man of affairs and achievements. His trouble is overwork, rather than underwork. And it is these men I have in mind in accentuating the difficulties of dissociating themselves from their business while remaining here at home.

Personally, I have never found myself able to get out of the atmosphere of my editorial and counting rooms. The whirl of the printing press never stills while I am on American soil. But strange though it may seem, I am as indifferent to work, once out on the ocean and with the ocean between myself and my work, as if I were entirely out of business.

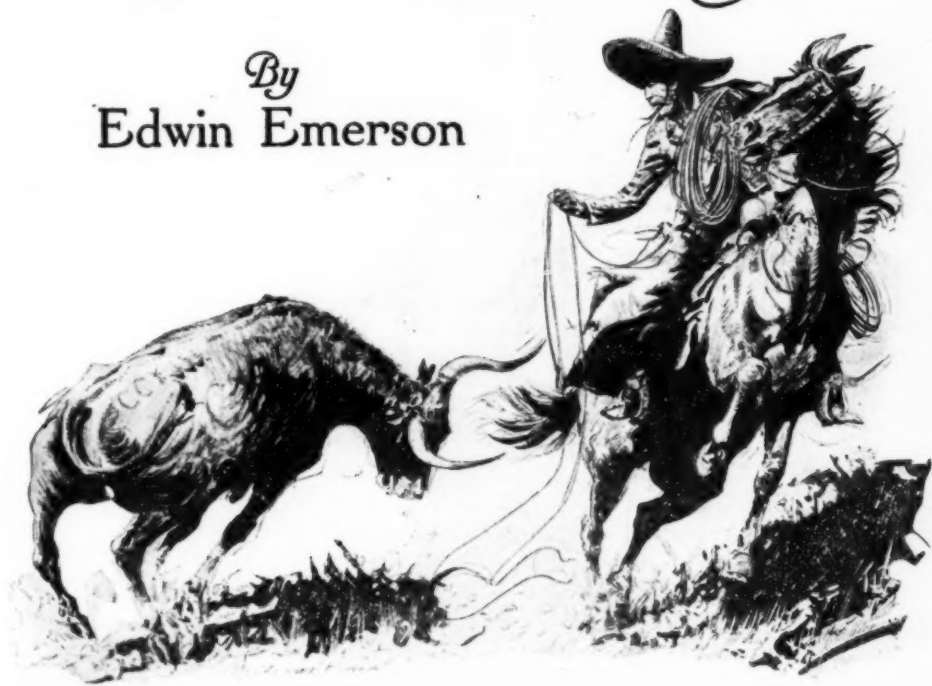
I can't tell you why this is so; I only know it is so. Going abroad, with me, isn't because of a lack of patriotism, but is to preserve patriotism, preserve it in the sense of saving myself, and in the sense that a trip abroad never fails to quicken my admiration for my own country, with its vast resources, its many climates, and its incomparable opportunities for human development and human achievement.



"BON VOYAGE"

The World's Greatest Cattle Country

By
Edwin Emerson



RITISH bards used to sing of the "rare, red roast beef of merry old England," and even Frenchmen, when they wanted good meat, called for a *bifteck à l'Anglais*.

But old England is no longer merry, and the so-called English beefsteak nowadays comes from the vast pampas of South America, not from the right little, tight little isle.

The passing of the beef supply of the world from England to the United States, thence to Cuba, thence to Mexico, and thence finally to South America marks, in truth, the passage of large feudal domains from the Old World to the new. As the land has been parceled off and fenced, the

large herds of cattle that were wont to roam the Old World have had to seek other open lands and pastures new.

One hundred years ago Europe drew its cattle supply from the Roman campagna, the Andalusian plains, and from the British Isles. Fifty years ago it came from our Western prairies. Twenty years ago Cuba produced the most cattle to the square mile. The Cuban War put a quick end to this, and the world's main cattle supply then shifted to the northern plains of Mexico. But the Mexican civil war, degenerating as it did into an all-around beef-stealing contest, has spoiled all that, and the world's beef supply has definitely shifted to South America.

Other factors besides wars and revolu-

tions have had their share in this, of course, particularly the settling up of our Western plains, the introduction of cheap wire fencing, the wide distribution of our railroads, the government irrigation projects, and, most of all, the perfection of cold storage.

Cold storage alone has made it possible for an Argentinian beefsteak to taste as good as a steak from an ox that has been slaughtered next door. Some of our American beef-packers and butchers are trying to offset this by calling all tough or bad beef Argentinian meat and all good or tender meat home beef, but the wary consumer is learning to know better.

Anyway, the fact remains that cold storage has made it possible to raise cattle for meat at the farthest ends of the world, where in former times the breeding of cattle produced nothing (beyond the extremely limited beef supply for home consumption) but hides and tallow.

If any readers doubt these statements let them ponder the following facts, taken from official figures:

Miller and Lux, the largest beef breeders

of the United States, with extensive cattle ranches in Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, California, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Washington, twenty-five years ago bred and exported just three times as many cattle as they do to-day.

Here are the United States Agricultural Department's figures for five years alone of American live cattle exports:

584,239	head	in	1906
423,051	"	"	1907
349,210	"	"	1908
207,542	"	"	1909
139,430	"	"	1910

Mexico received its strongest cattle-breeding impetus at the time of the Cuban War (1895-1898), when stock-raising in Cuba, which up to that time had been the island's most flourishing industry, came to a total standstill. The country that most profited from this was Cuba's neighbor, Mexico. Thus Mexico, five years ago, was exporting 213,993 head of cattle per year, *i. e.*, 6,451 more head than our country.

I recall when I was there in that year (1909) that on the West Terrazas ranch



A BIG LOOP AND A LONG THROW AFTER A STEER
HAS BROKEN AWAY FROM THE HERD

in Chihuahua they were branding no less than 46,000 calves in one spring, and at that fully one-half of the calves on the ranch had not been gathered up and



"CUTTING OUT" A STEER—SEPARATING HIM FROM THE COWS AND CALVES OF THE HERD

thus escaped branding until the following spring. Two years later, thanks to the Madero revolution, Mexico's cattle exports were diminished to 99,182. Last year they sank to 45,990, out of a total of some five million head of live stock. This spring they have been reduced almost to the vanishing point, so that it is predicted that beef will soon have to be imported into Mexico, an unprecedented thing since the days of Cortez.

Meanwhile the cattle industry in South America has been flourishing as never before.

In Brazil it is estimated that there are thirty million head of cattle. Of these the province of Rio Grande do Sul alone slaughtered eight million last year.

The best known cattle-raising regions in Bolivia, Uruguay, and Peru are on the table-lands, especially those situated from 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level. There they produce almost as much cattle to the square mile as in Brazil, but owing to inferior grass the Uruguayan, Bolivian, and Peruvian beef does not command as high

an export price as that of Brazil. Venezuela and Colombia, owing to their internal maladministration, do not ship nearly as many cattle as they might.

The largest number of cattle in the world is raised in the Argentine, which also boasts the highest figures for slaughtering and shipping of beef.

The latest statistics show that the Argentine has some forty million head of live stock and that in the public slaughtering-houses alone there were killed during the last year no less than half a million steers.

To get a just idea of the Argentine's predominance in beef exports, one need only scan these values of England's imports of frozen beef from all over the world during the last year:

From the United States.....	\$75,550
From Uruguay.....	1,704,500
From New Zealand.....	2,152,230
From Australia.....	6,907,040
From the Argentine.....	57,225,400

To explain these figures further, it is enough to state that the value of chilled

beef from the Argentine during the last ten years increased from 85,520 tons to 342,851 tons, whereas the export of the same article from the United States during the same period decreased from 115,525 to 7,229 tons. In truth, the Argentine is an ideal stock-raising country, because the climate is mild, permitting stock to be born, reared, and fattened in the open, without the need of artificial shelter or trailing to better grass regions.

There is an abundance of pasturage and water. The coarse, indigenous grasses of the pampas have been replaced by the so-called soft grass, which the Spanish *Conquistadores* brought to America as hay for their horses.

Alfalfa has spread over almost the whole land. Before that came to pass the provinces were classified as coarse-grass lands and soft-grass lands.

A great aid to the industry lies in the easy transportation as compared with other less modern countries. Railroads and river-ways abound.

The Argentinian national government early realized the necessity of making laws for the regulation of the cattle industry, and a law giving complete control to the president was passed.

He has the power in Argentina to regulate the transportation of live stock, the markets, factories, slaughter-houses, freezing and salting establishments, and all factories where prepared animal products are carried on. He has the power to isolate and destroy animals and property where it is deemed wise for the protection of the herds.

Companies and individuals must conform to the conditions imposed as regards the accommodation, security, and hygiene of the vehicles employed in the carrying of animals.

The president establishes the form in which the transportation companies shall disinfect wharves, yards, pens, and so forth. The exportation of infected animals is strictly forbidden. No vessel is allowed to unload animals unless her sani-

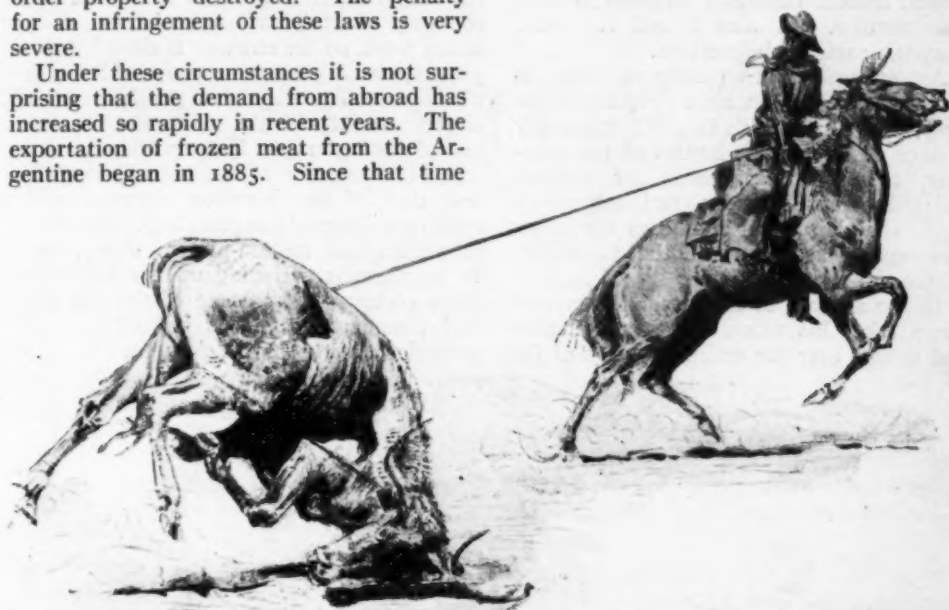


STARTING ON THE ROUND-UP, TO GATHER THE CATTLE FOR BRANDING OR SHIPPING

tary condition fulfils the requirements. In case of disease the president may suspend the exportation of animals from an infected district and maintain the embargo until sufficient time has elapsed. He may even order property destroyed. The penalty for an infringement of these laws is very severe.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the demand from abroad has increased so rapidly in recent years. The exportation of frozen meat from the Argentine began in 1885. Since that time

but the importations of beef in the West have been relatively small as compared with those from the Argentine, practically all of which came to New York. The significance of these figures is evidenced by



"BUSTING" A WILD STEER; IN OTHER WORDS, ROPING AND THROWING HIM

the trade has increased yearly from four to ten millions of dollars, until the Argentine Republic is first in the list of the cattle countries.

The herds have been constantly improved by the importation of fine thoroughbred cattle from Europe. From England have come the shorthorns, the Herefords, and Devonshires, and other cattle from Holland, France, and Holstein.

The increasing importance of South American meat to the people of the United States is revealed by the following figures on the importations of fresh beef and veal into this country last year:

Month	Pounds	Value
July	642,304	\$56,993
August	1,151,626	82,904
September	2,010,091	137,541
October	5,677,461	466,987
November	10,856,516	900,296
Total	20,338,088	\$1,644,721

These figures include importations of beef from Australia to the Pacific coast,

the fact that the New York Dock Company has just completed negotiations for large warehouse facilities in that city for handling Argentine beef.

The Argentine does not export only to Europe and the United States. Chile, her near neighbor, purchased over one hundred thousand head of cattle during the last year alone.

In the beginning, the only water for the animals was in the ponds and natural basins and brooks, but with the advance in methods has come the deep well of fresher and better water and windmills to pump it up. The water is stored in tanks of the Australian variety, sheet iron in the center and bottoms of clay, banked up outside with earth. From these reservoirs the water is drawn off as it is needed into the drinking-troughs.

A cattle ranch in the Argentine is called an *estancia*. Some are from ten to fifty square leagues, but the average extent is diminishing owing to the law of inheritance, which provides for the distribution

of property among children share and share alike. Thus are monopolies prevented.

The benefits of wire-fencing have been very great. Stock restricted to an enclosure become tame and attached to their own pasture. It also allows for more thorough sanitary inspections.

An *estancia* is frequently a town in itself. There is the house of the *estanciero*, where he and his family live, usually a large structure; the houses of the manager, office-buildings, sheds for storage, the coach-house, smithy, and carpenter's shop, the dairy and buildings for other purposes to accommodate the varied industries of the *estancia*.

In the absence of the owner the *mayordomo* takes his place, and has authority and charge over the entire workings of the

place. In former times the *mayordomo* was always an Argentinian, but of late these high positions are usually held by English or Germans.

The *mayordomo* gives his orders to the *capataz*, who, in turn, sees to it that his company of workmen execute them. The actual work on an *estancia* is done by the *gaucho*, or Argentine cowboy. He is a picturesque figure in his rough pampas clothes, skilful with the rope and bolo, and one of the best riders in the world.

All the romance of our old cowboy life and that of the Mexican *vaqueros* will soon be a thing of the past, kept alive only in stories and motion-picture shows, but in its place is springing up the infinitely more picturesque romance of the Chileno and Uruguayan *vaqueros* and of the Argentinian *gaucho* of the pampas.




THE CAPTAIN

He rallied to the rolling drums
 When he was young and spry,
 And when age thinned his grizzled locks
 And dimmed his eagle eye;
 But when one morning in his dreams
 He heard the bugles call,
 He rose and took his sword and sash
 And medals from the wall.

He folded all his blankets up
 In marching order neat,
 Put on his faded uniform
 Complete from head to feet,
 Lay down upon his bed, prepared
 To answer to the roll,
 A gallant soldier to the last,
 And yielded up his soul.

Minna Irving



The PRESIDENT of YALE

by Peter Clark Macfarlane



TALL, spare man, with shoulders slightly stooped, economical gray chin beard, and nervous, staccato movements, took his seat in a New Haven street-car. A moment later, spying both a friend and the conductor bearing down upon him, he arose, as if with instinctive courtesy, tendered five cents to the friend, and shook hands cordially with the conductor.

Some moments after this passenger had returned to his seat and his thoughts, as if with a sweet consciousness of duty done, he appeared to be overtaken by an awkward sense of something wrong or out of place. A shadow crossed his face, and then a mirthful gleam of light, after which, with an amused chuckle at the trick his absent-mindedness had played him, the handshake was hastily transferred to the friend and the nickel placed in the hands of the conductor, while a whole carful of people smiled behind their hands in the studiously decorous New Haven way. Of course the joke was all the more enjoyable to the New Haveners because the victim was recognized as Arthur Twining Hadley, president of Yale, and a man of such dazzling in-

tellectual brilliance that to most of his townsmen he seems at least as far away as Mars.

President Hadley is a man in the fifties, with close-cropped gray hair. His face is a narrow New England oval—forehead full and slightly seamed, nose good and strong, chin reticent, not to say retiring, eyes a trifle worn with much reading, but as full of sparkle as his conversation. His mouth is almost overstocked with teeth which, gleaming constantly as he talks, are a living witness to a laughing soul, which is no libel, since President Hadley has been declared to have the keenest sense of humor of any man in America.

He is excessively nervous. In his platform manners he is endowed with an awkwardness which, they say at Yale, amounts to grace. In personal conversation one is not conscious at all of this awkwardness, merely noticing the greatest excess of nervousness and being impressed by a vivacious chuckling cordiality and a sense of perpetual motion.

The president gets up and sits down; he waves his hands; he vibrates, rotates, gyrates, and all the time is striking off ideas like sparks from an anvil. Expressions scud across his face, which kindles or

grows dark, frowns or smiles, nods emphatically with approval, or shakes with stubborn disavowal, conveying the notion of kinetoscopic mental action at once spontaneous and dazzling.

The facts are that the president of Yale is a great big man and a great big mind—and at the same time a great big boy—a man from whom the enthusiasms of a singularly vivacious youth have never departed. His friends love to tell of a conversation in a staid New England home on the subject of mountain climbing in which the president astonished his hostess by stepping first upon a hassock, then upon a chair, and finally came to himself, at the close of his peroration, perched high upon the back of a sofa, from which, with a sudden, saddened sense of the proprieties, he abruptly dropped down with that little apologetic chortle which those about him recognize as one of the most affectionately human expressions of the man. I doubt this tale myself, but believe the moral it points.

And yet it must not be supposed that the president of Yale is either an eccentric or a man with reckless disregard for the conventions—not at all. Seldom a man more thickly overlaid with culture; never one with profounder respect for traditions and conventions. Not a native man, simply a natural man. He is the legitimate child of himself.

In youth he was regarded as precocious. The intellectual and nervous force of a long line of singularly virile ancestors appeared to have been injected into his somewhat frail body. His great-grandfather, a Mohawk Valley farmer, was the original of James Fenimore Cooper's famous hero, *Leatherstocking*. His grandfather was a pioneer in the scientific study of medicine; his father, James Hadley, was a professor of languages at Yale, a mathematician of rare capacity, a linguist whose Greek and Latin grammars were the classic pedagogical works of a generation; a man, the icy supremacy of whose intellectual powers is a tradition in Yale to this moment, and whom Andrew D. White, whose long career as an educator, diplomat, and scholar of international reputation gave the widest opportunity for observation, declared to be possessed of the most brilliant mind he had ever encountered.

Young Arthur graduated from Yale in the class of '76, and traveled a far way to

become president of his *alma mater*. The very multiplicity of his mental gifts made the choice of a career difficult. He not only inherited much of his father's genius and capacity, but appeared to have been born with a gnawing hunger in his mind which seemed to grow by what it fed on.

The more he absorbed, the more he wished to absorb. He undoubtedly had one of the most ravenous mental appetites ever given to a youth. Along with voracity had come a rarely retentive memory. He trained himself to habits of discipline, and so machined his brain that, like a cash-register, it not only absorbed facts, but indexed and ticketed them for instant reference.

After graduation, and still in this gorging mood, he went to Germany, and there he stuffed himself full on politics, history, and economics, returning after some years to New Haven with the problem of a career fully solved. He had determined to be a political economist, influenced to the decision, of course, by the head of the department of political economy in Yale in these days, William G. Sumner, one of the great teachers of his generation, and yet withal a man who left few disciples, those few, however, constituting a lion's brood of which President Hadley is probably the chief.

But there was another problem which the young scholar had by no means solved. Even scholars must eat. It is strange now, as one looks back, that a small professorship of some kind in Yale was not offered to young Hadley. With the traditions of his father's name, with his own brilliant college record, with the prestige of his years abroad, his highly agreeable personality, and the undoubted promise of his parts, it would seem but ordinary prudence to put the "Y" brand on this young maverick in some external form, as already it had been put upon the inside of him.

Perhaps he was too brilliant. Perhaps conservative Yale feared the tide of him was so full it might overflow the ruts in which academic life was then so snugly grooved.

Anyway, there was nothing whatever lingering about the handclasp that welcomed him back from Germany. Hail and farewell was in the manner of it. Hence, when the blasts of chilling winter blew through the streets of New Haven they bore upon their bosom this young



ARTHUR TWINING HADLEY, PRESIDENT OF YALE UNIVERSITY, POLITICAL ECONOMIST, AND
AUTHORITY ON RAILROAD FINANCE

From a photograph by Donnelly, New Haven

man who knew so awful much that nobody appeared to value but himself, wafting him in the general direction of New York.

In that city, and solely for utilitarian purposes, the young man espoused journalism as a career, and that part of journalism which was most closely related to his chosen field of economy, namely, the trade papers of business and finance. In this field of topics he soon centered upon the greatest of them all, the railroads.

His insinuating intelligence and nervous industry were swiftly at close grips with this subject upon many sides. He wrote financial articles for the railroad journals, and railroad articles for the financial journals, and presently was assistant editor of the *Railroad Gazette*. Within a few years there was a tome upon the shelves of thoughtful students entitled "Railroad Transportation," by Arthur T. Hadley. This volume, published in 1885, was almost the first attempt to analyze and correlate scientifically the principles of railway management. It is rather surprising now to turn over the pages of this book and see how many of the problems supposedly purely of our own day were already surveyed and their rocks and shoals charted by this analytical young journalist of a quarter of a century ago.

Recently an eminent railroad president remarked: "I have just been reading Hadley's volume published twenty-eight years ago, and, out of my now thirty years' experience, it is remarkable how few words in the book I would change."

In 1889, while delivering some lectures before the University of Minnesota, Professor Hadley met J. J. Hill, then in the heyday of his first successes as an operating railroad man.

"Is there anything we can show you?" asked Mr. Hill.

"Yes," replied Hadley quickly; "I should like to see the comptroller's sheets of the Eastern Minnesota."

A canny smile lighted the features of Hill. His Eastern Minnesota was just then startling the transportation world by some of its performances, and here was a college professor who knew exactly where to look for the secret of it—in the comptroller's sheets, which are the angel's book of life for the operating department of a railroad.

All forenoon the two men had their heads together, and Hadley, his mind

chasing hither and yon among the figures after its chain-lightning fashion, must have asked all sorts of illuminating questions which started the railroad man to thinking in new channels, because a few months later President Hill was heard to remark: "I don't know any one that it would be more profitable to put in a morning with on the comptroller's sheets of a railroad than this young fellow Hadley."

By the end of the ten-year period of journalism the persuasive personality of "this young fellow Hadley" and the thrusting inquisitiveness of his mind had made him widely known and respected. In 1885 Governor Harrison, of Connecticut, was looking about for a labor commissioner. He gave the job to Hadley.

The appointment of a young academician to this office provoked jeers from the labor organizations of the State. Some of them went so far as to file protests with the Governor.

Hadley's term of office covered a turbulent period. It was the time when the Knights of Labor were in the ascendent. There were strikes galore. The idea of labor organization was new both to the workers and to the employers. Principles and limitations were not so clearly discerned as now. The conflicts between the two contending forces were confused and blundering.

The young college man had his hands full, but he attacked his problems eagerly, shooting his keen mind into them from every possible angle. It is not on record that he solved so many of these problems; but there is not the slightest doubt that he helped greatly to clarify issues and to show contending parties in which direction their contentions led.

In one particular he achieved a distinct triumph, and that was in winning the complete respect of the labor unions. They found that this brain-worker from a college was a very real kind of a man, and that it was greatly to their advantage to have such a mind as his at the service of the State in that department which concerned workingmen so much. In consequence, when, after two years' service, Professor Hadley was replaced with a politician type of official, protests against this action went up to the Governor from labor organizations all over the State, including some of the very ones which had, but two years before, taken the opposite course.

By 1886 Yale had begun to see Hadley, yet only, as it were, with one eye, since it honored the young man with but a half-time professorship in the department of economics. It was five long years before this half became a full, although in the mean time the young Interstate Commerce Commission was coming down to New Haven to take opinion of the lecturing journalist, and his star as an authority on the practical side of economic science was steadily brightening.

However, in 1891 Mr. Hadley was made a full-time professor at Yale, and from that moment he came on swiftly. Only eight years later the corporation was choosing a president to succeed Timothy Dwight. There was much delay, much waiting for nominations from the retiring president, and a prompt disinclination to accept the nomination when it came. A committee was appointed and possibilities canvassed. Considerably to the surprise of the man's most intimate friends, and perhaps of himself, there was a gradual centering upon Arthur T. Hadley.

Once his fitness was seriously considered, it was rather astonishing to find in how many ways he measured up to all the specifications. Tried in almost any light, the man fitted. He was closely connected with the great generation which had passed. He represented the best traditions of Yale scholarship and of Yale democracy. By sheer appreciation of ability he had been advanced in eight years to the position of dean of the graduate school. Nor was it that Yale alone recognized his scholarly qualifications; all America had done so, and Europe as well. He had been elected president of the American Economic Association. His books had been translated into foreign tongues. As a teacher, while it was admitted that he sometimes lost himself and talked over the heads of his students, it was also recognized that his contact upon their minds was sharp and stimulating, and his influence of the highest. He was an able instructor, but a greater man than teacher. What he was inspired as much as what he said.

But there was one almost insurmountable objection. For two hundred years every president of Yale had been a clergyman. Arthur T. Hadley was several other things, but not that.

On the other hand, he possessed one ad-

vantage that told heavily with the hard-headed business men of the corporation. He had practical business capacities—the same quality that made President Taft choose him a few years ago to head his Railroad Securities Commission, and recently caused the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, at a time when that institution was needing directing worse than ever in its history, to select him for a member of its executive board.

Not that you are to think of the president of Yale as a sort of business machine! In no sense! The man is to be rated purely as a scholar. It is merely that in one lobe of his brain and in one loop of his life he made business the subject of his scholarly investigations. Hence, while President Hadley represents, in a very fine way, the flowering of the best traditions of Yale scholarship, and while lofty ideals are the regnant powers in his life, he is capable of bending a tow-line from them to the barge of practical college administration.

It is to be understood, also, that President Hadley is not a driving executive, forcing his personality into every department of college administration, as was President Eliot, for instance, nor is he a money-getter of the type of the late President Harper. Fortunately, he does not need to be, for God sent him the Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes for secretary of the corporation, himself a man of means and singularly gifted with that Aladdin touch without which it has not been possible for our modern universities to keep pace with the demands upon them.

Again, President Hadley, while respected and cordially regarded by the student body, is not their hero and does not command their devotion, like President-Emeritus Angell, of Michigan, at whose venerable appeal the students of that institution would have sold the shoes from their feet to restock its treasures.

While some of these might be regarded as reasons why Arthur T. Hadley would not make a good executive of some universities, there is a particular reason why they made him singularly suited to the slack-reined government which only can obtain at Yale.

Yale, by its very constitution, is no place for a strong-armed executive. Alone of the great educational institutions of America, Yale adheres to the German uni-

versity type of administration, and is almost a self-governing body so far as the faculty appointments, departmental organization, and administration are concerned.

The president of Yale is more a mediator than master. He is a kind of intellectual clearing-house, sitting with open mind toward the policies of the different colleges and professional schools, dispensing appropriations, granting or withholding concurrence, influencing opinion, giving impulse and direction to the tendency of the whole, but seldom forcing the presidential initiative into the individual departments.

He has no taste for small details; his greatest interest is in principles and ideals. And there is agreement that he has both lifted and modernized the Yale ideals and secured for them a very hearty acceptance within the different faculties and among the succeeding generations of students.

There is nothing hard and set about the man's policies. Without allowing the phrase to mislead us, he has tried to keep himself loose-minded. Ingrowing, barnacle attachments to methods he has sought to avoid strictly, and thinks he has succeeded.

When it comes to college ideals, there is no conflict in President Hadley's mind over the cultural versus the utilitarian value of education. His test is: *Does education make a man more useful to society?* He would have every Yale man go out with a passion for public service and utterly refusing to live unto himself alone or to satisfy his ambition with goals which do not somehow include a reward for the community, the nation, or the world.

President Hadley himself has this passion for public service to a marked degree. He has tried to make the university serve the government. At his instance Yale instituted a course in consular training, dealing with languages, business geography, and other departments of knowledge that would especially fit young men for entry upon the lower rounds of the diplomatic career. It is a commentary upon political conditions that the young men who took these courses, well trained as they might be, generally failed of securing recognition at Washington, and the department has been discontinued.

Hadley has also tried to make the university serve the spirit of the times. When the conservation movement came along the

president of Yale met it more than halfway with proposals to establish schools of forestry, of sanitary engineering, and of irrigation. The School of Forestry became immediately successful, has gained an endowment approximating half a million dollars, and ranks first among its kind in America.

The School of Sanitary Engineering has also been successful, although in a more modest way.

The School of Irrigation, on the other hand, was never born, for the reason that no money came forth for its endowment; yet the abandoned proposal remains a marker to the far-flung vision of the man.

However, the bright, conspicuous flash of President Hadley's prevision appears in his proposal of three years ago, that Yale should acquire the known deposits of radium ore in this country and hold them for the public good. At the time no philanthropist seconded the motion with the necessary cash, and the project failed. To practical men, no doubt, the suggestion appeared most visionary.

But, how swiftly the world's thought moves on! As this is being written, the Secretary of the Interior is recommending to Congress that the national government conserve the radium beds in the public interest, and the idea appears to meet with general approval.

Nor have the demands of the university upon the time of President Hadley kept him from rendering conspicuous public service upon his personal account. A notable example of this was when he went as an apostle to the Germans. That was in 1907-1908, when he filled the Theodore Roosevelt lectureship at the University of Berlin on the James Speyer foundation. President Hadley's theme was American History and Institutions. It is to be regretted that only one of these lectures has seen the light of English translation.

The Germans have always remembered President Hadley kindly for his visit, and some time ago the University of Berlin conferred upon him its honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy, which is generally recognized as the highest academic distinction in the world and one which has gone to but few Americans.

But what served to remind all America most prominently of the unique position which this university president holds in the world of business affairs was undoubt-

edly his selection by President Taft to head the Railroad Securities Commission, which was created as a by-product of the act establishing the ill-starred commerce court. This commission was composed of unusually high-grade men. The task assigned to it was enormous. The whole history of railroad finance was to be reviewed.

Hearings were conducted in several cities, at intervals in a period lasting over more than a year. Much divergent testimony was heard. The commissioners were themselves of many minds upon many phases of the problems before them, and yet they rendered a unanimous report.

Thanks for that unanimity are undoubtedly due the patience, the good nature, and the many-sided capacity of the chairman, Arthur T. Hadley. It was his organizing brain, with its faculty for wide and rapid generalizations, that led in the assimilation of the mass of facts adduced, and his pen that phrased the greatest part of the report, which is remarkable for its brevity. It contains but forty pages, and was written by busy men to be read by men as busy.

The report is remarkable also for its brilliant style. It abounds in pithy and sometimes half-cynical Hadleyisms. Here is one of its epigrams: "*It is easier to pass a radical measure that is going to be evaded than to secure obedience to a conservative one.*"

That is a sentence apparently innocuous, yet the more one scrutinizes it, the cleverer it appears. Beautifully, and while passing swiftly, it has tapped a finger significantly upon a glaring defect in the national character.

Considered as to its substance, the document is of vital importance now, although two years old, because the things of which it treats are the subjects both of discussion and action at the present time.

No legislation has resulted from this report. It was unfortunate in falling upon troublous times. It has attracted no great amount of attention. Only recently have calls for it begun to multiply as indicating the widening suspicion that here may be thirty or forty pages well worth the read-

ing of any man who is intelligently concerned with railroad finance—perhaps, indeed, more worth his reading than any similar number of words elsewhere to be found upon the subject.

However, any reference to this report here is merely to show through it the man, Hadley. In it and the work it represents we see something of the substance of his thought and of his capacity and willingness to serve his countrymen in a matter to most minds difficult, though to his very easy, because of a lifelong training and superability for the task, and yet a service not rendered without painstaking effort and considerable self-sacrifice. This performance, coming from the president of Yale in the midst of his scholarly duties, represents a high kind of patriotism. It was Arthur T. Hadley's call to the front, and one he answered unhesitatingly with the best that was in him. I think we might almost let it stand as a concluding testimony to the character of the man.

His life is a record of masteries. He is a master of his own department of political economy. He has a vast amount of exact knowledge in other fields, and he is a past master in his special branch of railroad economics.

His life is also a record of successes. As a student, as a reporter, as a labor commissioner, as a lecturer, as a university president, as a public-spirited citizen, and as a practical man of affairs, he has won the laurel.

Last autumn, when the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad appeared verging toward collapse, the instinctive turning to President Hadley for a place upon the directorate was as significant a tribute to his recognized ability as his willingness to go upon the board was one more evidence of the man's own public spirit.

And yet, in the final estimate, it must be remembered that we are not to consider President Hadley as a practical workaday man, but as a scholar. He is a thinker rather than a doer. It merely happens that he is that virile sort of thinker whose thoughts themselves are deeds.

This magazine is issued and on sale at all news stands on the 20th of the month preceding the date it bears

CONCLUDING AN INCIDENT

BY FRANK CONDON

UNTIL Andy Coakley took command of the Red Lion Inn on Wentworth Avenue, a blush of shame was always ready to mantle the cheek of him who admitted familiarity with its mahogany interior, because in the older days, the Red Lion was without any doubt the scene of many an iniquitous frivol and little children were wont to listen behind doorways when they caught their parents discussing it.

But when Andy added up the cash register and placed the "Under New Management" sign in the window, all was changed and the best people in Kansas City began to frequent the big room with its onyx pillars. There were no more brawls permitted and when a gentleman overstepped the bounds of propriety and demanded one more by pounding indignantly upon the bar, a white-coated attendant led him gently by the arm into the street. It was a most proper and nice-mannered Lion, after Andy tamed it and one could mention it in the bosom of the most respectable family.

Therefore, the indiscretion of Mr. Morgan Cartwright in the place was the more lamentable. After building up by honest effort a reputation for peace, dignity, decency, and high ideals, Andy saw his entire fabric shattered from the end of a pug-nosed thirty-two revolver carried in the somewhat uncertain hands of the said Cartwright, as the subsequent indictment referred to him.

It was late in the afternoon when Cartwright entered and there was no reason why he should not be served. He was known to Andy Coakley and had been a customer for many months. His family was one familiar to all Kansas Cityans who read the social columns in the papers, and he stood at the head of a wholesale electrical business, belonged to clubs, voted each year, and in short, was regarded as a

high-grade manner of citizen, and a young man with a brilliant future.

Towards nightfall, the Red Lion filled with its usual crowd and still Morgan Cartwright lingered. He conversed with no one until there came a stranger, who dropped into the line beside him and from the accidental rubbing of shoulders and a muttered apology, the two drifted into casual talk. Then it was that Andy noticed his regular customer was not quite himself. His utterances were thick and his voice louder than usual, but there was no occasion for interference.

From idle remarks, Cartwright and the unknown drifted along the conversational by-paths until they became involved in argument, which is something that often happens under the circumstances. Cartwright found himself saying:

"I don't care what you think, mister. You're wrong. I tell you that a man can stand anything, if he has to. He can stand adversity, pain, neglect, starvation, melancholy, a jumping toothache, a nagging wife, sorrows, unjust treatment—anything at all. I know what I'm talking about."

"A man," countered the stranger, "can stand some things, but he cannot stand others. There are griefs too great to be borne and pains too sharp to be withstood, whether they are mental or physical. You are in error."

That, briefly, was the argument. Cartwright enlarged upon his side of it, making a number of speeches that seemed to increase in earnestness, while at the same time, his temper became more ruffled. There is no way of telling whether the unknown man had been drinking, but after the argument had proceeded, with the two voices growing louder and louder, there was a sudden cessation of talk, a rapid interchange of blows, the flash of a knife, and suddenly Cartwright drew a gun.

He fired before the crowd could stop

him and the bullet struck the stranger in the forehead. He dropped to the floor. The blood trickled down his face and his hat rolled to one side. One of the bystanders knelt beside the motionless figure for a moment.

"He's dead," he said.

When the dazed crowd gathered its wits, Andy Coakley was plowing forward from the rear room. They told him what had happened. When they looked for Morgan Cartwright, he was nowhere to be seen and later on, when the police of Kansas City began an investigation, Cartwright had vanished from his usual haunts and his people could tell the officers nothing.

II

WHEN he left the Red Lion, Cartwright ran for two blocks. Then he slowed to a walk and whatever alcohol was in him lost its potency. His brain became clear and for the first time he realized that he had killed a man and that man a stranger, who had not harmed him. He saw the hole in the white forehead and the crowd about the prostrate form.

Cartwright suddenly experienced a sensation of great fear. The word "police" burned in his brain and he saw himself in a cell, in a court-room, in a big yard where there was a gallows. His sole impulse was to get away—to leave everything behind and forget what had just taken place.

Hence Cartwright slipped into a freight train, bound east and for twenty-four hours shivered in a corner. At Chicago, the escaping criminal took a fast express and another day found him walking along a grimy thoroughfare in New York's great East Side.

He had had plenty of opportunity for planning on the trip. What did men who murdered other men do, he asked himself? They fled as far as possible and remained in hiding, but in a great many cases, they were caught by the police. This was due to their lack of skill and intelligence; Cartwright decided. He would make no mistake of this sort. He had a great horror of what he had done, but a still greater fear of capture.

New York greeted the fugitive with the cold indifference it has for both the just and the unjust. Within five hours of his arrival in the metropolis, Cartwright had produced a change in his appearance that suited him and promised wonders. His

excellent suit of clothes was gone, with his hat and shoes. He now wore a ragged cap, a still more forlorn suit, the trousers of which did not match the coat. He dispensed with a shirt and only a red flannel undergarment protected him from the night chill. His shoes were worn and several holes adorned each. With care, he soiled his hands and face and the junk dealer who sold him the outfit stared in amazement.

"I'm playing a joke on a man," Cartwright explained.

Then, as his beard began to grow, the Kansas City Cartwright passed out and there took his place, a typical, panhandling New York hobo, frowzy, tattered, and decidedly unpleasant to look upon.

"I can never stand this," Cartwright found himself saying.

He had been sitting on a park bench for hours, wondering where he could find food. He had gone back involuntarily to thoughts of the old life, where there had been plenty of money, friends and food. Then he laughed and repeated the sentiment that had brought him to the park bench: "A man can stand anything he has to stand."

There were times when he meditated taking an easy route to less troubled places. The nights were growing colder and his beggar's garments that were sad enough when he bought them were gradually turning to rags. He suffered deprivations that at one time he would have said no man could stand and he learned the tricks of his new trade with rapidity.

The Bowery lodging houses supplied him with a bed. By day he prowled through the thronged streets of the lower East Side, picking up a bare living, begging a dime now and then, stealing a free lunch when it was possible and when he had five cents, buying a glass of beer and eating in legitimate ease from the cold slaw counter.

And this was the life led by Morgan Cartwright, once a respectable and well-to-do young citizen of Kansas City. The police of that energetic Western town looked high and low for him for a month or two and then the affair ceased to interest any one. The incident was closed.

For a few months, his new manner of living filled Cartwright with a chronic form of gloom. He was miserably unhappy day and night and the people with

whom he was forced to associate were repulsive to him. The sheets under which he slept in the five-cent lodging houses made him shiver. The food he ate sometimes gagged him and the cold almost drove him insane.

Time came to his relief. He became slowly hardened to everything and a grim amusement with himself and his life took the place of melancholy and removed all thoughts of slipping away to a better world. He found that he could laugh at his fate and two years skidded along the slippery road to Eternity.

Cartwright was wholly changed. He was a perfect specimen of the genus bum and he knew his country as well as any panhandler in New York.

On a November evening when the gray sky promised a night of snow, Cartwright knocked his heels together before a skyscraper on Fourth Avenue. He knew this building, because its people had treated him well in the past. It assayed better than other buildings and as he shivered in the cold, he glanced sharply into the faces of the men and women who had finished the day's work and were leaving.

Cartwright could read faces unusually well. When he decided that a man or woman would give up a dime, he was generally right in his deduction. A dozen well-dressed people left in a group and the waiting tramp singled out one of them and dropped into step behind.

The unsuspecting man turned to the west and Cartwright caught up with him before he had gone half a block. He was prosperous in appearance, and a heavy fur coat sheltered him from the wind.

Cartwright reached the side of his victim, looked up at him and said:

"Can you spare a poor, starving fellow a dime?"

"No," replied the other. "I can't. You'd spend it for booze."

The conversation seemed to be ended, but Cartwright hung on.

"I'll tell you what I *will* do," remarked the man in the fur coat after they had proceeded half a dozen paces. "You say you are hungry and you may be. If you are, I'll take you in and buy you food, but I won't give you a cent of money."

"That's all I want, mister," Cartwright answered. "I'm hungry."

"Come along," said the stranger and Cartwright followed.

They turned into a side street and halted before a café which advertised the fact that food might be obtained within. Cartwright admitted that he would like a glass of beer and the stranger ordered a plateful of assorted food to be placed before him on the bar and as the hungry tramp ate, the other surveyed him with interest and some astonishment.

Cartwright continued to gobble the food, without paying further attention to his patron, but when he had finished

"Much obliged," he said.

The stranger smiled.

"You poor devil," he said, "your life must be a perpetual nightmare. How do you live?"

"This way," Cartwright said shortly, waving his hand at the cleaned plate.

"Cold, freezing in winter, hungry most of the time, never clad properly, minus ambition and hope, I don't see how a human being can stand it," the other man went on, as though speaking to himself.

"A man can stand anything he has to stand," Cartwright muttered.

The other man looked at him suddenly. Then he laughed.

"You see this scar," he retorted, pushing back his hat.

Cartwright stared. In the center of the stranger's forehead was a white, round mark.

"Bullet hole," he explained. "It went in there, followed my skull and came out at the back. They call it creasing a man out West. I got it arguing with a stranger over that same remark you just made—that a man can stand anything he has to stand. We were drinking, quarreled and he winged me."

"He did," Cartwright said, dumbly.

With his mouth open and blank astonishment written upon his face, Cartwright gazed in fascination at the small, white mark upon the man's forehead. Drunk at the time of the quarrel, it was small wonder he did not recognize his victim now.

He saw, in an instant, what had happened to him. Deprived of his friends, his business, his home and all that belonged to his former life, he had been driven into trampdom by the accidental appearance of this man whom, until that afternoon in the Red Lion Inn, he had never before seen.

He had been forced to endure hardships

and poverty for two years and privations that seemed beyond human endurance, but he had proved the truth of his argument put up in the Kansas City café. Cartwright looked back over his miserable life in the slums of the metropolis and saw it all in a glance. He stared at the well-fed, prosperous citizen before him and something acutely painful boiled within him. That this was the man, he had no doubt, but—

"Where did this happen, mister?" he asked.

"It was in a Kansas City café," the man replied. "I came into the place and had never seen this fellow—"

"And he didn't die at all," Cartwright was saying to himself. "He's been alive all the time and there was no need for my exile. Well, I take back what I said. A man can stand *almost* anything, but this is too much—too much!"

The few patrons of the café turned at a

queer sound. Some of them had been facing the oddly assorted pair and they saw a sudden movement. Cartwright stepped back calmly, pulled back a still muscular arm and a second later his doubled fist crashed against the jaw of the stranger.

The stricken man dropped to the floor—knocked out as utterly as though a sledgehammer had struck him.

The crowd made a rush for the tramp, but Cartwright was in the street before they could touch him. Again he fled and again he escaped.

"See if you can stand that," he growled, glaring back.

The crowd lifted the unconscious stranger to a table and poured water into his face. Blocks away, Cartwright scurried along.

"I wonder what's the telegraph rate to Kansas City," he murmured, "and where I can raise it."

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GREAT INTELLECTS POORLY HOUSED

BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

IN the last analysis human history resolves itself into a history of the human brain. Everything that has really happened first happened in the brain. Wherever brute force proves itself undeniably valuable, as in war, or in great engineering undertakings, it is because of the watching and directing brain behind it.

The motive personalities that have made the history of any race or nation have been the men and women of brain; and as brain, by the aid of those elemental energies which its science discovered and now so considerably controls, has made merely physical force a laughing stock and a ruin at the pressing of a button—as lightly

tossing a city to the winds as once it would have taken a year to storm a tower—it becomes more and more evident that the brain of man is what man has to count with, as well as to count on. And, further, for the reason that it seems to be our nearest point of contact with those mysterious powers that seem to govern our lives.

Admitting, therefore, the importance of the brain in human affairs, its often whimsical selection of a physical lodging is the more interesting, not to say significant. As a general rule the old Latin proverb, *mens sana in corpore sano*, holds true, and in the great majority of cases the sound

mind is found in the healthy body; yet in proof of this rule there are some striking exceptions that set one thinking. Indeed, no little of the dynamic greatness that has brought man to his present state of being has been housed in bodies very frail and very unfit. As the greater the general, the less he troubles about his quarters, satisfied with the barest necessity, so the brain seems to be able to make good with any ramshackle physical apparatus that will hold together, and all that appears to matter about a great man's body in certain notable cases seems to be—is there room enough in it to house his brain, and enough vitality to convey to it that slender vitalizing that it needs?

There is no necessity to explore the by-ways of history to discover examples of this strange biological truth. We need only take a few of those names which immediately come to the tongue, or arrest, so to speak, the historic eye, as one glances ever so casually over the field of human advancement.

Of the body that housed perhaps the greatest brain in human history we have this description: "His presence was mean and his countenance grotesque. Short of stature, thick-necked and somewhat corpulent, with prominent eyes, with nose upturned and nostrils outspread, with large mouth and coarse lips, he seemed the embodiment of sensuality and stupidity."

Such was the outer man of Socrates as he walked about the streets of Athens, always on the lookout for any fellow citizen who would talk or listen about the deep things of life. From a face like a comic mask came that inspired conversation which Plato has embodied in his "Dialogues," from so earthen a vessel came our divinest discourse on the soul. Epictetus, again, whose sayings have enriched the religious life of so many generations of mankind, was a little, lame tatter of a man, clinging to physical life by the frailest hold.

Among philosophers of the modern world there are two that overshadow their respective periods like two rocks towering out of the plain. We have but to say Voltaire and Kant. Their history is in their names. The power of thought has never been more strikingly illustrated than by these two great men, and never has such dynamic thought been more paradoxically domiciled.

One of Voltaire's opponents, now utterly forgotten, except by association with the insult, said of him that his "leanness recalled his labors, and that his slight, bent body was only a thin, transparent veil through which one seemed to see his soul and genius." The "extraordinary thinness" of this great man was remarked upon by another observer—"a mere skeleton, with a long nose and eyes of preternatural brilliancy peering out of his wig."

It is always perilous to think, and this skeleton with the bright eyes lived in a time when it was peculiarly perilous to think. He had only his brain to protect himself with against the staves of the lackeys of the Chevalier de Rohan—only Voltaire's brain. One laughs now to think of it—but, if one laughs, it is only because we have come to realize how much a pinch of that high explosive called brain means in the history of humanity—and how little the well-fed, highly paid retinues of swollen aristocrats, or even plutocrats, can avail against it.

As for Kant, his merely physical envelope seems to have been scarcely less flimsy than that of the possibly mythical Greek philosopher who was so small and slight that it was necessary for him to keep stones in his pockets lest the wind should blow him away: for all descriptions of Kant agree as to the pathetic fragility of the house thus mysteriously provided as the temporary lodging of his great brain. He was "scarcely five feet high," said one, "and his body seemed to have received from nature the impress of feebleness as its characteristic. . . . His bones were small and weak, but proportionately his muscles were still weaker." His chest was compressed, and his right shoulder turned backward and higher than the other; and "ever since I knew him," relates one who had been acquainted with him for fifty years, "his body was extremely emaciated, and at last it was dried like a potsherd."

But his dearest friend, Jachmann, adds one detail that means more than all the rest: "Where shall I find words to describe his eyes! Kant's eye looked as if it had been formed of heavenly ether." Yet one of Kant's eyes had been blind for four years, without either himself or his friends knowing it.

One other almost quaint detail of his

fragility, again related by his friend Jachmann, is that a newspaper fresh from the press could give him a cold. Such was "the physical man" of him who gave us that "Critique of Pure Reason," the significance of which in the history of the world no one need be told.

These men who have thus fought and thought and dreamed for mankind have not always been so apparently and pathetically frail. Sometimes the strange bird that nests in the brain chooses a while some clumsy giant, also half blind, like Samuel Johnson, afflicted with painful and humiliating scrofulous disease for which neither he nor his immediate parents seem to have been responsible—that "King's evil" for which he had a child's memory of being "touched" by Queen Anne.

There is little doubt, too, that Johnson suffered from epileptic tendencies. Such seems to be the explanation of those strange antics recorded of him in many well-known anecdotes; such as that of his insisting on touching every post he came across as he walked down Fleet Street. Another anecdote tells that one day, going to make a call on a friend, he paused a while on the door-step and then gravely spun his huge bulk round like a top several times before entering.

Yet neither "King's evil," nor epilepsy, nor half-blind eyes could prevent his manfully doing his notable work in the world. It was under such physical disadvantages that he produced his great "Dictionary" and all those various writings, unduly depreciated to-day, which won him his towering position in a by no means unsophisticated or unlettered age. But, apart from his achievement as a writer, his personality, as preserved for us in the pages of Boswell, remains one of the most valuable possessions of the Anglo-Saxon race, so unique in its combination of a manly piety, with so searching a wit and such sturdy common sense.

The man who was wielding the scepter of English letters when Johnson, all unknowing of or caring little for any destiny beyond his duty, was obscurely scribbling in old London, was one to whom only the descendants of the dunces whom his "Dunciad" flayed into a fearful transfiguration deny the name of poet, he who, after all, wrote, too, "The Essay on Man" and made the only translation of Homer

the average Englishman reads. The ro-buster Wycherley, so godlike and beautiful in comparison, spoke of his "little, tender, crazy carcass," and when Johnson came, in the course of years, to write of him in his "Lives of the Poets," quoting the authority of an old servant of Lord Oxford who had frequently seen him in his later years, it is thus he describes Alexander Pope: "He was so weak as to be unable to rise to dress himself without help. He was so sensitive to cold that he had to wear a kind of fur doublet under a coarse linen shirt; one of his sides was contracted, and he could scarcely stand upright till he was laced into a bodice made of stiff canvas; his legs were so slender that he had to wear three pairs of stockings, which he was unable to draw on and off without help. His seat had to be raised to bring him to a level with common tables. A lively little creature with long legs and arms; a spider is no ill emblem of him." But his face was "not displeasing," and "the thin, drawn features wore the expression of habitual pain, but were brightened up by the vivid and penetrating eye."

Well might a later biographer, Leslie Stephen, add: "It was, after all, a gallant spirit which got so much work out of this crazy carcass and kept it going, spite of all its feebleness, for fifty-six years."

Johnson belonged to the blundering, half-blind giants precariously carrying a lighted candle of the soul in the somewhat foolish-looking Hallow's Eve lantern of their heads; Pope, on the other hand, was rather like Shakespeare's famous toad, with still "that precious jewel in his head." At all events, he belonged to the mysterious race of "crook-backs," of whom Richard III was no unillustrious a representative, and the brilliant, ill-starred Scarron another—that Scarron who was wise and witty enough to have won Mme. de Maintenon for his wife, and again witty and wise enough to resign her to Louis XIV—for the good of France.

The history of "crook-backs" has, perhaps, been written, but I have not come upon it. The idea of the superior brain and higher spirituality of the hunchback was one that fascinated Balzac in more than one of his novels—he attributed it to an enforced accumulation of the spinal marrow—and writers like Charles Reade and George Eliot, not to speak of Hugo,

have made them no merely fantastic but spiritually commanding and lovable heroes of our strange human drama. In fact, the hunchback is but the extreme illustration of my present thesis.

Another great writer who owed little to his body, but whose tongue was at once the bitterest and the sweetest ever belonging to poet, was Heinrich Heine. Yet the lightnings of that wit which kept his enemies in terror, and the melody of those lyrics that have gone singing like birds around the world, emanated alike from a half-paralyzed invalid, tortured continually with pain, as he lay for years on his "mattress grave" in the Rue d'Amsterdam, Paris.

"What does it avail me," he cries in a famous passage, "that enthusiastic youths and maidens crown my marble bust with laurel wreaths if, meanwhile, the shriveled fingers of an aged nurse press a blister of Spanish flies behind the ears of my actual body? Of what avail is it that all the roses of Shiraz so tenderly glow and bloom for me? Alas! Shiraz is two thousand miles away from the Rue d'Amsterdam, where, in the dreary solitude of my sick-room, I have nothing to smell, unless it be the perfume of warmed napkins."

It is inspiring to think that Heine's most memorable work was done under these conditions, and that the poetry by which he is best known, iridescent and joyous as a fountain in the sun, was born in that sick-room, amid "the perfume of warmed napkins."

Another sick-room from which streamed over the world a no less vital and precious song was that of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, that room with the lowered blinds in 50 Wimpole Street, London, where the frail, spiritlike woman, all eyes and brain and heart, must not move from her couch without assistance, surrounded by silent rooms and low voices, and seldom allowed the dangerous excitement of a visiting friend.

"I am a recluse, with nerves that have all been broken on the rack, and now hang loosely, quivering at a step and breath . . . there is nothing to see in me; nor to hear in me. . . . If my poetry is worth anything to any eye, it is the flower of me. I have lived most and been most happy in it, and so it has all my colors; the rest of me is nothing but a root fit for the ground and dark."

It was so she wrote to Robert Browning, desperately battling against his manly rejuvenating love which, in spite of all obstacles, was to raise her from her living tomb and bring her out once more into the sun.

Yet another darkened room, filled with blithe, undaunted singing, comes to one's mind—that of Robert Louis Stevenson in the little Riviera town of Hyères, where, in 1882, he had gone on one of his many pilgrimages in search of health. Consumptive from his boyhood, he was just slowly recovering from some unusually dangerous hemorrhages when, in addition to other complications, he was attacked with ophthalmia. This necessitated his lying in almost complete darkness, but, as his biographer writes, "in silence and the dark, and in acute suffering, he was still cheery and undaunted"—and this, of all unlikely times, was the time he chose to write that happiest book of children's song, "A Child's Garden of Verse," writing down the verses for himself in the dim light with his left hand—his right arm being in a sling on account of the hemorrhage.

This is a story of grit, such as, to use a phrase of Stevenson's own, "delights the great heart of man," and human history is full of such stories. Indeed, nothing in human history is more inspiring than the evidence it is continually bringing that the race is not by any means always to the swift, or the battle to the strong. Even the great soldiers and statesmen of the world have not infrequently been men frail or diseased of body. Cæsar is said to have been an epileptic; and, while France boasts, perhaps, a greater number of distinguished names than any other modern country, yet it is questionable whether there would have been any France to boast of had it not been for the stern will and terrible political wisdom housed in the insignificant body of Louis XI. The masterful spirit of Richelieu, again, inhabited a frame sickly and wasted with disease.

Frederick the Great, who did for Germany what Louis XI did for France, was tortured with asthma and gout; and perhaps no man has ever more clearly demonstrated that the body is quite unnecessary for the winning of battles. As he sat up in his all-night asthmatic chair at eleven o'clock of the night before he died, he bade his attendants throw a quilt over one

of his dogs that was shivering with the cold and gave orders for the morning parade.

"At four," he said, "I will arise." Then, after surmounting a long fit of coughing, he said: "We are over the hill, we shall go better now."

And when one thinks of soldiers and conquerors, one's mind swings back to another Greek philosopher, a big-minded, frail-bodied man, Diogenes, sitting in his tub and watching, with an ironical smile, the legions of Alexander sweeping by.

It would be easy to add, at one's tongue's end, many more names illustrative of my argument—names such as Nelson for courage, Wesley for religion, Chopin for music, Parkman for history—names testifying, by their mere mention, that the body is not the soul, and that many of the most dynamic minds of men that have changed the course of human history, as it can only be changed, by the power of thought, have been housed in bodies to which, on the one hand, your "eugenist" would refuse to open the door of life, and, on the other, the morgue would contemptuously open the doors of death.

When the world is in difficulties it does not run to some thick-witted Samson, whose strength the frailest slip of a girl can topple down—healthy and rude and splendid as the hills. On the contrary, it is more likely to ask help of some mild, undersized, bald-headed professor, gentle and probably timid, whose body may well seem to have been acquired second-hand for only one purpose—that of housing, for its necessary time, the combined searchlight and battery of his brain.

I once knew a man who professed himself the happiest man on the earth. There may have been a little pardonable affectation in his statement—still no one who knew him could doubt its essential truth; yet he had lost both his legs and his arms, had but little sight left in one eye, and only partial hearing in one ear. A cruel accident had made it necessary to trepan his skull. Nevertheless his brain was merrily going all the time, his heart beating bravely, and his tongue had lost neither its

kindness nor its wit. Without being a great or famous man, he still remained of great service to his community.

All his physical accidents had done nothing beyond somewhat incommoding the operation of his soul and his mind; and, as he was a philosopher, he would sometimes talk over with me—as we smoked a cigar together, for that he could still do with the aid of a friend—on how little of himself a man might not merely be happy, but even be more useful to mankind than others who go about with the usual complement of organs and limbs. I admit that he was an extreme case—but in the history of human thought and human efficiency he was by no means so great an exception as might be deemed.

"The soul is in its own place," said a certain great man who, though he did not live to any great age, has not yet, so far as I know, been explained away by any disease; and he, of all men, understood what strange nests the soul may build for itself, in what crazy skulls it may lay the eggs of the future, or through what half-blind eyes it may behold the stars.

I trust I shall not be misunderstood to have attempted here any argument on behalf of those melodramatic biologists and pathologists who would persuade us that genius is merely a product of disease, men who can predict your music from your liver, who would prescribe consumption to poets and gout to historians, and who, generally speaking, accept epileptic fits as the final explanation of all greatness—whether it be that of the saint, the soldier, the king, or the philosopher—the man who considers the dunghill a sufficiently satisfying explanation of the rose.

As I said at the beginning, great intellects poorly housed are the exceptions, not the rule. Nature prefers, as a rule, to house her great intellects magnificently, as in a Sophocles, or a Goethe, or a Napoleon, and she but illustrates what one might term her indomitability, her capacity for achieving her ends in spite of all obstacles, and even through defective media, when she thus occasionally employs the imperfect vessel.

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THEN HE SAT DOWN AND TOLD THE WOMEN OF HIS CRIME IN HIS OWN BOASTFUL WAY

GRAVEN IMAGES

BY FRANK M. O'BRIEN

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR LITTLE

TWO comely young women, one of whom held herself a bit more proudly than the other because she—herself, not the other—was the sweetheart of a notorious fugitive from justice, sat in a little room on the floor above the rear of Chalky Sam's saloon in Ninth Avenue.

This was a peculiar room, in that it could not be reached from the saloon nor, indeed, by any means except a dark labyrinth that led from the rear, a devious way known only to the elect.

Amelia Elsberg, the prouder of the women, was of the elect, as all who had watched her since her graduation from the Hay-

market could testify, and she was waiting for Yiddo George Glandorf, gangster and gunman by occupation and now, by force of circumstance, a creature in hiding and eagerly sought.

The other woman, Amelia's friend, Minnie Pipes, could claim much less distinction, for she was merely the wife of a second-class burglar whose clumsy ways had led him time and again into the net of the police. Even now he was confined in police headquarters, with seemingly nothing between him and Sing Sing but a shyster lawyer.

The waiting women were not shut off from all communication with the outer

world. A slim dumb-waiter, large enough for alcohol but not for man, brought to them gin-fizzes mixed by the deft hand of Chalky Sam himself. They drank these and talked but little, for Amelia was on the hooks of nervous expectation and Minnie Pipes was glum in her own particular despairs. She was, in a way, like the foil of a heroine in a play; she only served until Amelia's hour of triumph, when Yiddo George had come. A bridesmaid envious of the bride.

Through the single window of the room the women saw a mist turn to drizzle and the drizzle turn to rain, but the harder it rained the brighter became Amelia's face. Yiddo George's message, sent underground, was that he would meet her "at the usual the first afternoon it rained." So for three nights she had prayed, in her fashion, for rain; and here it was.

Here, too, was Yiddo George, for the door opened softly and a man stepped in, put down a violin-case, and kissed Amelia. Then he removed a long rain-coat that hid his figure from chin to heels and took off a pair of large, dark glasses. He plucked from his head a soft hat and a mop of black hair that had hung down to his shoulders, and put the wig on the back of a chair, where the wet ends could drip freely. Now Amelia could see him as the sallow, lean, short-haired, rat-eyed, and adorable tough that she loved.

"I borrowed the works off Glimpsey the Fiddler," Yiddo George explained. "He's sick, and the doctor made him take his wig off."

Then he sat down and told the women of his crime in his own boastful way—as if they, or at least Amelia, had not read every word of the stories of a sensation that had lived through at least fifteen editions of the evening papers.

He was the only one of his gang still free. The three others, scattering in as many directions an hour after they had shot the jeweler beside their waiting taxicab and left him dying on the sidewalk, had been ratted on or rounded up. It had happened a week before, yet there he was in the heart of New York, walking through the streets and keeping tryst. If the papers knew that!

Amelia petted, patted, and flattered him, while Minnie Pipes regarded the hero and heroine with wistful glances. She suddenly remembered something to say.

"They've even got you in the wax-works, Yiddo," she whispered, for whispering was the rule in that room of caution. "My little nephew was at the Paradise Museum yesterday and he told me that they've got a real taxi, with Eddie the Monk and Big Charley on the driver's seat and you starting to get in the door with a gun in your hand. The jeweler is dead on the sidewalk, with blood running out of his head, and Rothberg is taking the big wallet out of his pocket."

Yiddo George grinned.

"I guess I'll go around and have a look," he said.

"Don't, George," pleaded Amelia. "There's always a cop around there."

"Only the wax one at the ticket-office," said Yiddo George reassuringly, "and he's made up for Inspector McEntee, a chesty stiff."

"He's head of the dective burio," put in Minnie Pipes.

"Yes," said Yiddo George, "and the other fellows must have been a lot of dubs to let him get them. I walked by McEntee on my way up and bumped the fiddle-case against his leg." This, of course was pure fiction, but it had the desired effect.

"Gee whiz!" chorused the ladies, all admiration. Yiddo George walked to the window and looked out into the gloom.

"It's raining harder," he said, "and it's dark for three o'clock. I've got to go and see Big Charley's brother-in-law for half an hour or so, and then, if it looks right, I'll go around and see myself in wax. I'll be back in an hour or two, and then maybe we can think of some quiet place to have the eats. I'll leave the fiddle-box here."

With a sigh he put on his disguise and kissed Amelia.

"I'll bring you the little finger off my statue," he said, and disappeared into the labyrinth.

"Isn't he daring?" said Minnie Pipes. "I'll have to leave you now, dear. I've got to go and see Izzy, the lawyer, about Marty. Something's got to be done to get him out of the freezer." And so Amelia was left alone.

Yiddo George's was not the figure of a criminal as he moved through Twenty-Third Street half an hour later, swathed in the dripping rain-coat and crowned with the fiddler's wig and soft hat. Before he turned into the Paradise Museum he ob-

served, with relief, that the lobby was deserted save for the brave wax figure of Inspector McEntee.

The inspector, he recalled having heard, was a boyhood friend of the proprietor of the waxworks, and his figure guarding the door was in the way of admiring appreciation. The likeness was fair, as Yiddo George saw at a glance, and the clothes fitted perfectly. Perhaps it were better to say that the figure fitted the clothes.

McEntee, who was not without conceit, had been dissatisfied when his counterfeit first appeared. The garments originally applied to the wire form were a suit cast off by a patrolman. McEntee, on observing this gross error, sent one of his own old suits to the museum, and now the figure having been properly stuffed (particularly in the chest, as a rude critic once remarked) was something at which the original, live McEntee, was not ashamed to look.

Under thick, black brows the glass eyes twinkled as brightly as glass eyes ever can. The closely cropped mustache, which the wax artist brilliantined religiously every spring, was a little blacker than the mustache of the living McEntee, for the living McEntee was growing old. If he had ever read of *Dorian Gray* he might have wished—but he never had.

Yiddo George paid his admission fee, boldly rubbed against the figure of his huntsman, and went up the brass-bound stairs to the "chamber of horrors." A few persons were there, engrossed in the study of the crowned heads of Europe, all captured at once in a Harlem parlor; of a lean man in spectacles rocking a boat and incidentally strangling a rich widow; of President Taft bidding himself good-by; of Tyrus Cobb whacking out a tremendous hit and starting at once for third base, and of many other things important to American life and art.

George looked at these things, too, for he must not appear eager. And so, presently, he found himself alone in front of one of the alcoves at the rear of the long room and saw himself as the wax artist's mind had seen him.

Yes, it was all there, and at that not so very badly done, he thought. The taxicab was an out-of-date affair, not at all as classy in its lines as the one that he and Eddie the Monk had picked for the job, but the museum folk had treated it liber-

ally with paint. The Monk and Charley, gracing the front seat, stared into infinity, and Yiddo George chuckled when he saw that the sculptor had made Eddie homelier than he was in the flesh, a task that seemed nigh impossible.

And now Yiddo George looked for his own presentment. It stood somewhat in the shadow of the cab, and he had to step closer to see if the likeness was true. He found it surprisingly so, except, of course, that he considered it not so handsome.

"He must have got a flash at that Bertillon picture," said Yiddo George to himself. "The tip of the left ear is gone. But I didn't wear a cap and I didn't wear black, shiny shoes. I wore—"

He looked down at his shoes—yellow ones, with yellow buttons—and whistled. These were the shoes he had worn that day. It was a mistake to wear them now; why, even the police circulars carried a careful description of them.

"I'll throw 'em away to-night," George told himself.

He smiled at sight of the revolver in the wax hand of his semblance, a cheap "tin thing," such as may be had for a dollar or so. He could feel his own gun, the big blue .44 of his cult, resting against his hip.

The room, except for himself, was vacant now. Yiddo George shook his finger warningly at his own "statue."

"You look out," he whispered, "or McEntee'll get you. He might catch a wax man." And then he started to turn away.

A deep, roaring voice, the voice of a man in earnest and in asthma, came booming up from the foot of the stairs. It was the voice of Mr. Joseph Helmbolt, who owned the museum.

"Come up for a minute, inspector," it bellowed, and the bellow made Yiddo George cold at the heart. "Come up and see the new group of the taxi robbery. I haven't seen it yet myself. Schwennmacher only finished it the other day, and my asthma's kept me from climbing the stairs. But he says it's good for a quick job."

Yiddo George keened his ear for the answer.

"I only dropped in to say howdy do," it came, "but I'll spare just a minute." Four slow feet began the ascent of the brass-bound stair.

Yiddo George, looking in the many mirrors of the ceiling, could see the two

men long before they reached the top. Yes, one of them was Inspector McEntee.

There is only one staircase in the Paradise Museum, and Yiddo George knew it. His heart grew colder and he felt, through the open pocket of his rain-coat, for his revolver. Then he remembered that he was not a criminal, but an honest, humble musician out for an afternoon's diversion.

"He'll never know me," he decided. "I'll stall around toward the other side of the room." Something at his instep snapped. It was a yel-

Yiddo George made his choice. He put his glasses in his pocket, flung his hat, wig, and rain-coat into a dark corner, plucked the cap from the waxen George and put it on his own head, and then cast his graven image head-first into the gloomy depths of the cab. He drew himself into the position that the wonderful Mr. Schwennmacher had assigned to his "statue" and thanked his own particular fiend that he, of all the figures, posed in the shadow. He was ready.

Inspector McEntee, standing beside his



INSPECTOR MCENTEE VIEWED THE GROUP AND VOICED THE ADMIRATION THAT WAS EXPECTED OF HIM

low shoe-button trying to part from its moorings. Yiddo George turned nearly as yellow as the button.

"Those shoes'll give me away," he groaned, and slipped into the alcove.

The cab door looked inviting, but his own wax figure stood in the way. Besides, that were a poor hiding-place; too much like a rat-trap to make a getaway from.

A slowing down in the wheeze of Mr. Helmbolt told the outlaw that the asthmatic was taking a much-needed rest at the head of the stairs. McEntee waited patiently with him.

wheezing friend, viewed the group and voiced the admiration that was expected from him.

"Great!" he said. "Your man is a wonder, Joe. I don't see how he can get up things like that from pictures and descriptions. That's a ringer for Rothberg. He's the best one of the group, unless it's Yiddo George. I'd like to get that Yiddo—not your wax boy, but the real guy. He's the one that did the shooting, all right. Well, I must be getting down-town."

They went slowly down the stairs. Yiddo George never moved until he heard

a loud, asthmatic "Good-by, inspector." Then he dragged his semblance from the cab and restored him to the place of honor. Five minutes later a long-haired musician went slowly down the stairs.

The lobby was again deserted except for the guardian officer of the law. Even the ticket-booth appeared vacant. As Yiddo George neared the last step he remembered his promise to Amelia—the little finger from his own "statue."

"I won't go back for it," he decided. "I'll take McEntee's instead." And he reached out his right hand—his gun hand—to make good.

But the finger that he sought went upward and forward on its own mission, traveling with its fellows in an uppercut that sent Yiddo George senseless against the wall of the box-office. Two plainclothes men, slipping from within, seized him, while Inspector McEntee entered a side room to wash the rouge from his cheeks and the black stuff from his mustache. Then the janitor, wondering at it all, carried the wax McEntee back to its fixed post.

Late that night, hours after the papers had heralded the dramatic capture so far and so wide that the news of it had even crept up the slim dumb-waiter to the secret room over Chalky Sam's—late that night the police commissioner dropped into the office of the head of the detective bureau

to offer his congratulations. Inspector McEntee was duly modest.

"But," said the police commissioner, "if you recognized him in the group, why didn't you take him then?"

"Because," said the inspector, "the gun in his hand wasn't the little tin kind they use in museums. It was his own gun, and he was ready for business."

"Besides," he added, with a twinkle in his eye, thus again resembling the figure at the door of the Paradise, "we all like our little dramatic stuff." And the head of the department agreed that this was so.

"By the way, commissioner," said Inspector McEntee, "I think I'll turn loose that Marty Pipes we've been holding on suspicion of burglary. There doesn't seem to be any real evidence against him."

The commissioner, not interested, nodded consent. McEntee rang for his bureau assistant.

"Let Marty Pipes go," he said shortly. The aid's eyebrows went up a trifle, but quickly fell.

"Very well, inspector," he said. "He's Minnie Pipes's man, isn't he?"

McEntee turned on him with a frown.

"Yes," he said gruffly. "What of it?"

"Nothing," said the aid, "only Minnie Pipes was stabbed to death in her flat half an hour ago by a woman named Amelia Elsbeg."

"So soon?" said Inspector McEntee.

This magazine is issued and on sale at all news stands on the 20th of the month preceding the date it bears

A BACKWARD GLANCE

Two fishers, barefoot, snug in the crook
Of the old elm's ample knee,
With packthread line, a pin for a hook,
And a pole from the willow-tree—

Your girl and my boy in the leafy nook
Where long ago were we,
Two fishers, barefoot, snug in the crook
Of the old elm's ample knee!

Alas, how widely the paths we took
Have parted you from me!
You have your gold—I, pen and book—
But oh once more to be
Two fishers, barefoot, snug in the crook
Of the old elm's ample knee!

Stokely S. Fisher



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THE SUNSET

From the painting by Hoppner

CHILDREN IN PAINTINGS

(SEVENTH PAPER: GAINSBOROUGH, ROMNEY, HOPNER, RAEBURN)

BY CLAYTON HAMILTON

IT is a curious fact that, until so late a period as the eighteenth century, all the great painting that was done in England was done by foreign artists; and it is all the more remarkable that, in the short span of a single generation, Reynolds and Gainsborough and Romney, and a goodly company of lesser artists, should have developed a native school of por-

traiture that is very nearly as brilliant as any other in the world.

The history of painting in Great Britain may be said to date from 1526, when the Earl of Arundel, returning to the court of Henry VIII from a journey on the Continent, brought with him Hans Holbein, the younger, who was then thirty years of age. Holbein was persuaded by a royal

pension to remain resident in England until his death in 1543; and during this long period he enriched the world with innumerable portraits of English worthies. But Holbein's work died with him. He

Van Dyck devoted the final decade of his career to this ingratiating task; and, unlike Holbein, he established a definite tradition of portrait-painting in Great Britain that was followed for nearly a century. His



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WM. FERGUSON OF KILRIE

From the painting by Sir Henry Raeburn

formed no school in England, and left behind no pupils who were capable of carrying on the high tradition of his art.

The next important date in the history of painting in Great Britain is 1632, when Charles I invited Anthony Van Dyck to immortalize the aristocracy of England.

most successful imitators, Sir Peter Lely and Sir Godfrey Kneller, were both born in the borderland between Germany and Holland; and, instead of initiating a native British school, they merely served to continue the foreign fashion that had been established by their illustrious predecessor.



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THE BLUE BOY

From the painting by Gainsborough

The first great painter who was British born was William Hogarth (1697-1764). He proved that it was possible to be a good painter without copying Van Dyck. Instead of looking at nature through bor-

ive romanticism of Sir Peter Lely; and this first of British painters, by his sturdy honesty of outlook, prepared the way for the great period of British art that was to follow. Of the painters of this period,



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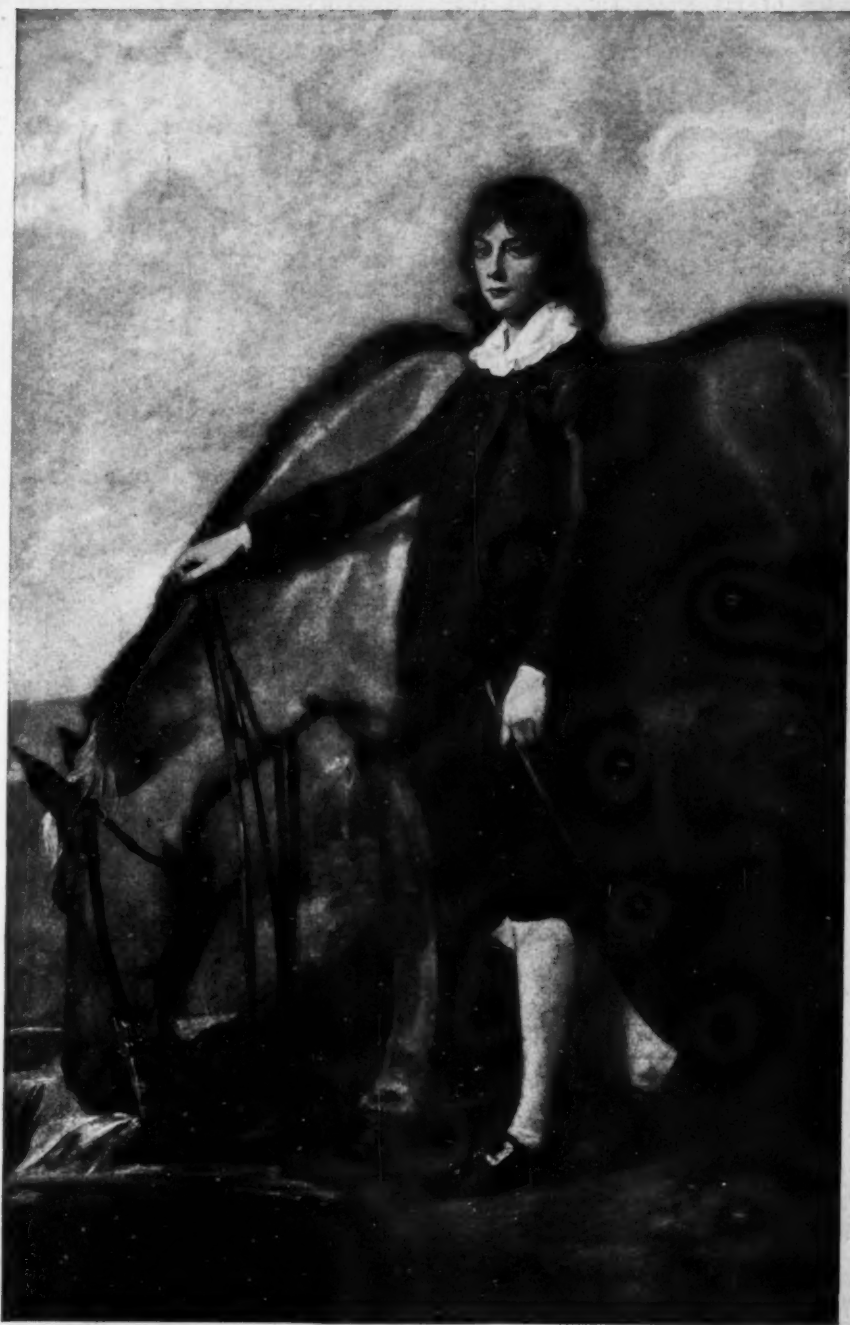
MRS. LEE HARVEY AND CHILD

From the painting by Sir Henry Raeburn

rowed spectacles, he chose to paint life precisely as he saw it. It was doubtless for this reason that the eccentric but deep-sighted Whistler described him as "the only great English painter."

The realism of Hogarth served as a salutary antidote to the somewhat excess-

Reynolds was the most cosmopolitan and Gainsborough the most distinctly British. Reynolds was endowed with a critical and an eclectic mind. He went early to Italy, and developed his own style from a study of many of the great masters of the past. His work, though by no means lacking in



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JOHN WALTER TEMPEST

From the painting by George Romney

originality, may be described as a personal expression of his scholarship. But the work of Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) was more utterly original in inspiration.

Gainsborough had no teachers, or none of any consequence; he never went abroad; and the record of his life is merely a record

of his own uninterrupted labor in the three successive centers of his activity—Ipswich, Bath, and London. He died without ever having seen any of the great paintings on the Continent; but his reverence for Van Dyck, with whose work in England he was, of course, familiar, was indicated by his dying words. He had been on bad terms



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LORD BURGHES

From the painting by George Romney



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H.R.H. PRINCE OCTAVIUS OF ENGLAND

From the painting by Gainsborough

with Reynolds, because of a not unnatural jealousy between them; but when he was stricken with his mortal illness, he sent for the greatest of his rivals and made his peace with him.

As Sir Joshua sat beside his sick-bed, Gainsborough suddenly exclaimed, "We are all going to Heaven—and Van Dyck is of the company": and, with that word, he fell back dead.

The most famous of the paintings that are reproduced in connection with the present paper is Gainsborough's "The

Blue Boy." This picture is a portrait of Jonathan Buttall, the son of a very wealthy ironmonger who lived at the corner of King Street and Greek Street in Soho. He is dressed in a costume that was designed in imitation of Van Dyck; but Van Dyck himself would never have dared to paint this costume in that tint of heavenly blue for which the work is famous. It was believed for a long time that Gainsborough had executed this canvas as a retort to the Eighth Discourse of Sir Joshua Reynolds on the massing of lights.



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THOMAS FANE

From the painting by George Romney

Reynolds asserted that the dominant masses in a picture must be painted in warm colors, such as red, yellow, or yellowish white; but Gainsborough proved, in this portrait, that such cool colors as blue, green, and gray could be massed with success. It now seems to be established that "The Blue Boy" was painted in 1770,

before the delivery of the Eighth Discourse of the president of the Royal Academy; but the triumph of Gainsborough in achieving an unprecedented technical accomplishment is not by any means decreased by our knowledge that he scored this feat by instinct instead of by design.

The original of "The Blue Boy" is owned by the Duke of Devonshire and hangs in Grosvenor House in London; but there is a very good copy in New York, in the collection of the late Mr. Hearn. This canvas may either be a replica from the hand of Gainsborough himself, or it may be a copy by John Hoppner, to whom the original belonged for several years.

John Hoppner (1758-1810) was a less accomplished artist than the leaders of the British school. He lacked both the spontaneity and fluency of Gainsborough and the perfected artistry of Reynolds. The one painting by Hoppner that is reproduced herewith is interesting mainly because it is so obviously a work of the eighteenth century. Though lovely to the eye, this composition is noticeably artificial. The three figures are placed in an academic landscape; and the hour of the setting sun has been selected only that the figure of the little boy may be exhibited before a background of sheer light.

In 1781 one of the leading citizens of London said: "The town is divided between Reynolds and Romney; I belong to the Romney faction." Sir Joshua took cognizance of this rivalry only by ignoring the name of the upstart from the north and referring to him always as "the man in Cavendish Square." George Romney (1734-1802) was endowed with an extraordinary gift for portrait painting. The story of his life reads like a romantic tragedy. He began his career in Kendal, a little town in Cumberland, where he was married at an early age. In 1762 he divided his small fortune with his wife, and, starting out with fifty pounds, rode forth to seek his fame in London. In a dozen years his work was the talk of the town. But he regarded his portraits merely as hack work, and longed for the time when he could devote himself to "heroic" subjects and execute a series of immortal illustrations to Shakespeare and Milton.

When he had amassed sufficient wealth to give him leisure, his health broke down and he succumbed to hypochondriac hallucinations that led him to the verge of madness. Thereupon he returned, "a remnant most forlorn of what he was," to the wife he had deserted so many years before. She nursed him through his final illness; and, as Fitzgerald said, "This quiet act of hers is worth all Romney's pictures—even as a matter of art, I am sure."

Though Romney died a disappointed man, and regarded his myriad of rapid portraits only as so many stepping-stones to that higher art whose fitful gleaming lured him ultimately into madness, his best work is destined to survive the iniquity of oblivion. He painted with a keener poignancy of emotional appeal than the more studious Reynolds or the more brilliant Gainsborough. He revealed his genius at its very best in his portraits of beautiful women and lovely children. He painted them spontaneously, in all their flowerlike simplicity, with an art whose chief charm is the absence of any noticeable effort.

Contrary to the fashion of his century, Romney imposed upon his sitters the uttermost simplicity of attire. Instead of dressing up his women and his children, he dressed them down (if the phrase may be permitted). A rigorous simplicity of line, a few notes of charming color, afforded Romney all the material necessary.

But perhaps the greatest genius in this entire group of painters was Sir Henry Raeburn (1756-1823). Born in Edinburgh, Raeburn was even more utterly devoid of predecessors than any of his English contemporaries; and it seems scarcely an exaggeration to state that he incorporated in his own career the entire history of Scottish painting. At the age of twenty-nine he journeyed to Italy to study the great masterpieces of the past; but, except for this tour of two years, he passed practically his entire life in Edinburgh, cut off even from a knowledge of the activities of his fellow artists in London.

This man, so utterly remote from teachers, from rivals, from successors, was one of the greatest portrait painters of all time. He enjoyed the big advantage of dwelling in Scotland at the period when the national life ascended to its highest intellectual supremacy. While Gainsborough and Romney were painting an aristocracy of birth, while Reynolds was painting an aristocracy of civic position, Raeburn was painting an aristocracy of brains. His sitters were people of character, in the most exalted sense, and his portraits are pre-eminent as characterizations.

He was endowed with an astounding insight into personality; he seemed to see his sitters at a glance. He boasted that no face or hands could ever give him trouble, and he usually sketched in these significant details in a couple of hours. All that

took him time was the arrangement of draperies, the choice of background, and the mystery of lighting. In simple, direct rendition of character Raeburn is excelled only by Velasquez and Frans Hals among the portrait painters of the world. Like the works of these supreme masters, his own portraits seem astonishingly "modern" in their treatment. He frequently eschewed the conventional landscape background of eighteenth-century portraiture in favor of a simple and unfeatured background before which his sitters might appear in luminous relief. He was gifted with a sense of atmosphere, a sense of light and shadow hovering in air, which excelled the perception of the greatest English painters of his time.

Another of Sir Henry Raeburn's most ingratiating traits is his ready sympathy with all his sitters. Though his portraits of men display his greatest gifts for characterization, his charming personality is most appealingly revealed in his portraits of women and children. He shows them in a shadowy reverie that haunts us with a hint of music over waters. Nothing could be lovelier than that portrait of a wistful youth, with open neck and ruffled shirt and straggling hair, that is reproduced in connection with the present paper. All the sweetest, finest Scottish people of his time have been rescued by his magic from the grave; and his children, like the fabled Peter Pan, are immortal in their youth and loveliness.

This magazine is issued and on sale at all news stands on the 20th of the month preceding the date it bears

THE SILENT PEOPLE

BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

BEING THE SEVENTH OF THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF
MR. STANLEY BROOKE, THE DELIBERATE DETECTIVE

ON the first Sunday in May there occurred in the heart of London a tragedy simple enough in itself, yet with a strange and sinister meaning for those who cared to study life a little way beneath its exterior crust.

Among the well-dressed crowd of London's fashionable people swarming in Hyde Park between midday and one o'clock on Sunday a woman, whose rags were only partially concealed by a rusty black shawl, was seen suddenly to reel and fall.

She was picked up dead. Upon the bosom of her threadbare gown were pinned a few words of writing, which afforded to the smug press of the country an opportunity for many rhetorical flourishes. They led, too, to other and more serious things, for there were those who accepted them as a message.

These were the words, written very correctly in faint but straggling characters upon a half sheet of coarse white paper:

I am thirty years old. I am going to die. I am tired out. There is no hope in this world for the poor. I have done my best. I have a husband and four children. My husband earns twenty-one shillings a week. I cannot feed him, myself, and four children on twenty-one shillings a week. I have tried.

My children are thin and hungry. My husband never smiles. He, too, is losing his strength. I myself am the withered remnant of a woman. I have no hope. I know that there is a life, but, for some reason, I am not asked to share in it.

This morning, for once, I go to see the sunshine. I go to see the other women. Perhaps I shall understand what it is they have done to deserve life and I have not done. And then I shall rest.

When the newspapers had finished with

their stories, and a satisfactory fund had been raised for the children of the dead woman, things began to happen.

A millionaire employer of labor, who had closed his yards and turned seventeen hundred people into the streets because one of the commodities used by him had reached a price which he declared made his business unprofitable, was shot dead as he crossed the pavement from his house in Park Lane to step into his motor-car. His murderer turned out to be one of his unemployed workpeople whose wife had gone on the streets to find bread for her starving children. The man defended himself from the dock with a rough eloquence which paralyzed even the law.

Within a few days other events happened which pointed to some systematic effort. Four factories in different parts of the country, whose owners were deservedly unpopular, were destroyed either by dynamite or fire. A trades-union official, who was reported to have accepted a bribe from a federation of employers to prohibit a strike, even though he was in possession of large funds subscribed by the workpeople, was missed for several days and discovered with a cord around his neck in the Thames.

Then a leading daily paper published a mysterious document which had been dropped into its letter-box by an unknown hand. It was headed:

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND!

There are millions who have been waiting for a sign. Eleven days ago a woman died in Hyde Park, and the message found pinned to the rags which covered her withered body has been accepted as that sign. England is governed by laws—laws ill-made by man for his kind. The old laws are hard to break; the new laws are difficult to frame. From our place in the wilderness we who send this message have spent many weary hours pondering over the great subject—how and in what fashion shall we make heard the voice of the sufferers?

A short time ago hundreds of women, nourished in comfortable homes, educated, civilized, apparently respectable, called attention to a grievance from which they imagined themselves to be suffering by great and wanton destruction of property. Their grievance is to ours as the light of a candle to the burning of the sun. There are those who have approved their methods. They have taught us a lesson. Cause and effect shall be dissociated in our minds. Until you listen to us we will kill, burn, and destroy. When the moment has come we will point to you the way to freedom.

To-morrow the king drives through the city to the Mansion House. The king to-morrow will be safe. But between Ludgate Bridge and St. Paul's Cathedral one of the horses drawing his coach will be destroyed.

THE SILENT PEOPLE.

This document was scoffed at by nearly every one who read it. Even the editor of the paper was derided for publishing an anonymous hoax. That morning, however, half-way up Ludgate Hill, a spectator was seen to break through the little line and, taking a deliberate aim, to shoot one of the horses of the king's coach through the head.

He was at once arrested—in fact, he made no effort to escape. He made no reply to the charge and remained absolutely dumb, both at the time and subsequently. He was committed to prison during the king's pleasure, a fate to which he submitted with the utmost indifference.

On the following day the letter-box of the *Daily Observer* was watched by the cleverest detectives in London. The sub-editor, however, discovered in the morning another communication among the rest of his correspondence. This document was headed in the same way:

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND!

We have a thousand men like William Clarke ready to do our bidding; ready to kill, burn, or destroy, as we choose. We are tired of our labor members and our magazine-writing socialists. The people speak now for themselves. We adopt the tactics of a more educated class.

On Thursday one of the masterpieces in the National Gallery will be destroyed.

THE SILENT PEOPLE.

This time, short of closing the National Gallery, every possible precaution was taken, but about three o'clock in the afternoon the Madonna of Giotto was discovered cut into strips.

The perpetrator of the deed was easily arrested. His name was Johnson. He was a weaver by trade, out of work, and poorly dressed.

He made no reply to the charge, no reply in the police court, and, refusing to answer the simplest questions, he was committed to prison indefinitely.

On the third day another communication was received and published in the *Observer*:

We of the people have been accused always of ranting, of shouting our wrongs from the house-

tops. Let us hope that our new tactics will be approved. We have left off words. We have come to deeds, and those who do our bidding have learned silence. To-morrow there will be wrecked the house of one whose name is held by us as the name of an enemy.

THE SILENT PEOPLE.

Throughout London a certain thrill of anticipation seemed to quiver in the air from hour to hour. Who was there who could be called an enemy of the people? In great black head-lines the evening papers told the story.

In a suburb of London the house of a member of the government who had risen from the ranks, and to whom such measures for the relief of the poor which a temporizing government had devised had lately been entrusted, was completely wrecked.

The man himself had escaped, but his house was in ruins. He stood branded as an enemy of the people. On this occasion the thrower of the bomb remained undiscovered. The house was one of those which had been left unwatched.

II

It was about this time that Stanley Brooke made a thrilling and amazing discovery, which at first threatened seriously to alter his relations with his partner. He arrived home unexpectedly early one night to find a note asking him to call in and report. He discovered the door of her flat unfastened and the door of the inner room wide open. Hearing his footsteps, she called out:

"Please come here at once."

After a moment's hesitation he obeyed. He advanced even to the threshold of the inner room and, for the first time, saw inside. He stood quite still, transfixed with surprise.

Every detail of her sitting-room was always rigidly reminiscent of Constance herself. Even the easy chairs were a little severe, and the furniture which she had added from time to time was of a somber and decorous type. Her color-scheme was gray; the pictures which hung upon the walls were nearly all landscapes; her whole environment always seemed so thoroughly in keeping with her clothes, her manner of speech itself of prim, almost Quakerish simplicity.

He had pictured her own room as something like this: a simple bedstead, a few prints, an apartment clean and bare and

chaste. He looked instead into a chamber utterly unlike anything he could have imagined.

The walls were colored a faint rose-pink, and there was a carpet on the floor of almost the same hue. The bedstead was of white, with a top of hooded muslin tied up with ribbons. There was an easy chair and a large divan, chints-covered, luxurious; a dressing-table covered with dainty trifles; and on the bed, by the side of an empty basket, a little heap of garments which seemed to him like a sea of lace and muslin, with blue ribbons stealing from unexpected places.

Everything was spotless, exquisitely dainty. It might well have been the sleeping apartment of a princess.

Brooke stood rooted to the spot. His final shock of amazement came when he realized that Constance herself was wearing a dressing-gown of white muslin, that she seemed like a bewildering vision of fluffiness and laces and ribbons. He was absolutely incapable of any form of speech. He simply stood and stared while her face grew darker.

"How dare you?" she exclaimed, advancing rapidly toward the door.

"You called me," he declared. "I got your note and hurried down. When I came inside you called me."

"I thought it was Susan, you idiot!" she retorted, slamming the door in his face.

He walked slowly away. The maid whom Constance had recently engaged for several hours a day entered hurriedly, almost at the same moment, from the outside door. She smiled at Brooke as she passed.

"I am afraid that Miss Robinson will think I have been gone a long time, sir," she remarked. "I could not find the shop."

She disappeared, closing the door behind her. Brooke threw himself into an easy chair. So there was another Constance, after all, a Constance who loved the things a woman should love, a Constance who was as dainty and sweet as anything he could have conceived in his most sentimental moments.

He felt his heart beating with the pleasure of it. Her life, then, was to some extent a pose. At heart she was like other girls. He sat with half-closed eyes, dwelling upon those few seconds—seconds full of exquisite imaginings.

It seemed to him that he had never in his life looked upon anything more beautiful than that little chamber and its contents. Even Constance, when she at last appeared, could not dispel his dreams. She was dressed in severe and homely black, unrelieved even at the neck. A vision he seemed to have had of silk stockings was dissipated by the sight of her square-toed shoes. She came toward him in an absolutely matter-of-fact way. He rose, a little embarrassed.

"If I was rude just now," she said calmly, "I am sorry. The fault, I suppose, was mine."

"I certainly," he explained, "would not have dreamed of—"

"That will do," she interrupted. "We will not discuss the subject again, ever. I hope you will humor me so far as to forget the occurrence. I sent for you because I wanted to talk."

He nodded.

"It is three weeks since we did anything."

"I have nothing definite to propose now," she went on. "I wanted to speak about the Silent People."

"There is a reward of a thousand pounds offered this morning," he remarked.

"They are doing all they can to break the thing up," she said. "People are growing uneasy. The question is whether, supposing we were successful where others have failed, we could take that thousand pounds' reward with a clear conscience."

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean that I am not at all sure," she continued, "that my sympathies are not with the Silent People."

Brooke, whose habits of mind were conventional, even though his views were broad enough, shook his head.

"One may see weak points in our laws, in our whole social system," he observed, "but the attacks made upon it must be legitimate. I say that it is the duty of every one to uphold the law."

"Yours," she replied, "is the point of view of the man in the street. I will not tell you exactly what I think. Only this—if you join with me in a certain scheme which I am about to propose, it must be on this one condition only: that in the event of success, the claiming of that reward—that is to say, the denouncing of these people—must rest with me."

"I do not mind that," he assented.

"You understand," she repeated. "Even if we are successful—supposing we find out who it is that writes those notices and who has planned these outrages—if I decide that the knowledge is to be forgotten, it must be so."

"I agree," he said. "I think that your instinct will be too strong for your humanitarianism."

"We shall see," she rejoined. "There are a good many threads hanging loose, a good many which have been tried already and thrown on one side. Now tell me, you have done what I asked you this afternoon?"

He nodded.

"I was at the House of Commons at four o'clock. I heard Cammerley bring in his bill."

"What did you think of him?"

Brooke hesitated.

"At first," he said thoughtfully, "I was disappointed. Then he began to impress me. His is rather a curious personality. Nothing about him suggests in any way a leader of the people. He has a thin frame, he stoops, and he wears gold-rimmed spectacles. He spoke almost without gestures and his voice at times was quite low. It was not until he had been speaking for some time that one realized that he was, after all, in his way an orator."

"He had no notes, he spoke with perfect assurance, and he said some startling things. But he didn't attempt to make the points that these labor men nearly always do. There wasn't a touch of rhetoric in anything he said. He simply spoke of the coming of the people as though it were written."

"He believes that," she murmured.

"On the whole," Brooke concluded, "I should put him down as a dangerous man."

"Why dangerous?"

"He is a revolutionary. One could almost imagine him a Robespierre."

"Even that," she remarked, "may come."

"And now," he asked, "tell me exactly why you wanted me to hear him. You had some reason."

"I had," she admitted. "I think that if you could see inside his brain you wouldn't have much trouble in earning that thousand pounds."

"He is one of the Silent People!" Brooke exclaimed.

Constance waited for a moment.

"You know," she said then, "that I am a member of the Forward Club?"

"You told me so the other night," he replied. "I remember how surprised I was."

"There is nothing for you to be surprised at," she continued calmly. "Anyhow, I was there the other afternoon. Cammerley was having tea with a woman at the next table. They were talking together earnestly. You know how acute my hearing is. I caught a single sentence. It was enough."

Brooke was obviously interested.

"If Cammerley is really mixed up with those people," he said, "it would cause a sensation if it were known. He has been getting quite a little following of his own lately. The other side have rather taken him up. The *Daily Mail* had a leading article on him one day last week."

"Why not? He is a strong man. In a few years' time, unless accidents happen, the country will have to reckon with him."

"Accidents?"

"I mean if he does not come to grief," she explained. "It is his pose at present to be a moderate man. They say that at heart he is a red-hot anarchist, ready to sacrifice the country, the lives of millions, if necessary, to his principles. That is why I wonder whether we should not be doing good rather than harm if we were to take that thousand pounds' reward."

"You would have to get your proofs first," he reminded her.

"We might fail," she admitted. "On the other hand, we might succeed. What I cannot make up my mind about is whether we might not do more harm by succeeding."

"But you are not a socialist yourself!"

"I am not so sure about that," she answered.

He shrugged his shoulders. It was certainly not the place or the time for arguments.

"In any case," he begged, "tell me just what you have in your mind."

"You are still in touch with the *Daily Observer* people," she said. "Well, go and interview Mr. Cammerley on their behalf. Talk to him in his own house. See if anything occurs to you."

"No hints?"

"None. I am not keeping anything from you. I simply heard a sentence pass

between him and a woman whom I know very well by repute. Go and see what you think of him."

Brooke glanced at the clock.

"I'll go to-morrow," he promised; "but in the mean time—"

"I am going to dine at my club to-night," she interrupted, a little ruthlessly. "I shall be leaving in a few minutes."

"You wouldn't like to take me with you, I suppose?" he suggested.

"I should dislike it very much indeed," she replied. "I don't see the slightest reason why I should pay for your dinner."

"It's only eighteenpence," he ventured hopefully.

"The amount is not so serious, perhaps," she admitted. "It is the principle. Besides, I want to make a few inquiries there about Mr. Cammerley's friends. I shall be better alone."

"Constance," he began, suddenly inspired by a recollection of that little room.

Her eyes flashed a warning.

"I consider the use of my Christian name a liberty, Mr. Brooke!"

He turned on his heel and went out. It was not until he had left the room that her lips relaxed in the least. Then she smiled.

III

BROOKE presented himself at two o'clock the next day at a large and gloomy-looking house in Bermondsey, a house which had once belonged to a manufacturer of leather who had chosen to live near his works, but which stood now in almost pitiful isolation, with a tan-yard at the back of it and a row of small shops on either side.

A woman admitted him, a woman who was neatly dressed but who wore no cap and had not the manners of a servant. He passed along a bare hall and was shown into a large, untidy-looking study.

Mr. Cammerley looked up from his desk as Brooke approached, but did not offer his hand or attempt any form of conventional greeting. He pointed, however, to a plain deal chair close at hand.

"I do not understand," he said, "why you have come to see me. Your card says that you are a journalist. One paper has already turned me inside out and indulged in a photographic representation of the person I am not, and given a faithful description of the things I did not say and

the views which I do not hold. Surely one is enough?"

"These are curious days," Brooke remarked, setting his hat upon the table. "The whole reading public is crazy for personalities."

The man behind the desk looked at him steadfastly. It seemed to Brooke that those light-colored eyes were growing larger behind his spectacles.

"What is the name of your paper?" he asked.

"I am a reporter on the *Daily Observer*," Brooke told him.

"You are also a liar," Mr. Cammerley said calmly. "Your name is Brooke, and, with a certain young lady as your partner, you have been teaching Scotland Yard its business for the last few months. Now, sir, what the devil do you mean by coming to see me under false pretenses? Is there any mystery connected with me or my life? Is there anything you wish to discover?"

Brooke shut up his note-book. He had the curious sense of being in the presence of a man who could read his innermost thoughts.

"To tell you the truth," he confessed, "I was wondering whether you could not give me some information with regard to the Silent People?"

Mr. Cammerley continued to look steadily at him.

"Supposing I could," he asked, "why should I? You are a stranger to me. There is a thousand pounds' reward, I believe, offered for information about these people. Why should you associate me with them in any way?"

"You are a socialist," Brooke reminded him. "You speak with wonderful restraint, but that very restraint is impressive. I heard you yesterday afternoon in the House of Commons. I may be wrong, but to me you seemed to represent the type of man who would go to any lengths if he considered himself justified by his principles."

"For an inquiry agent," Mr. Cammerley declared, "you certainly do seem to be possessed of a certain amount of perception as regards elementary facts. How much of this interview is going in your paper, Mr. Brooke?"

"Not a word," Brooke replied.

"So I imagined," Mr. Cammerley remarked dryly. "Then listen. You are

right. I am an anarchist, if you like to use the word. That is to say, I would, if I had the power, rend this country from north to south that the better days might dawn. I would do evil that good may come."

"It is a dangerous doctrine."

Mr. Cammerley raised his eyebrows.

"A surgeon cuts off your leg that he may save your life."

"He obeys fixed laws," Brooke retorted, "and disease is a matter of fact, not principle."

Mr. Cammerley smiled indulgently. He glanced at the papers before him.

"Mr. Brooke," he said, "you are wasting my time. I have no desire to make a convert of you."

"Tell me something about the Silent People," Brooke persisted, "and I will go."

Cammerley rose slowly from his place and moved to the door. He held it open and turned his face toward the stairs.

"Lucy!" he called.

An answer came from above. Cammerley remained with the door open. In a few moments a woman appeared, a woman broadly built, with a dark, square face, a slight down upon the upper lip, and beautiful eyes—the eyes of an enthusiast. Her hair was parted simply in the middle. It was black and shiny, and there were large quantities of it. Her dress was plain in the extreme. She looked from Cammerley to Brooke.

"It is a young man," Cammerley explained softly, "who has come here in the guise of a reporter to know if I can tell him anything about the Silent People."

Not a muscle of her face changed, only a sudden light shone in her eyes. Brooke, who was glancing at her, shivered. For some mysterious reason he felt that he was in danger.

"This visitor of ours," Cammerley continued, looking at Brooke dispassionately, "has been associated with a young lady in various investigations during the last few months. He would call himself, I suppose, a private-inquiry agent, or something of the sort. He has become interested in the craze of the moment. He is exceedingly curious about the Silent People."

The woman sighed. When she spoke it was with a slight foreign accent.

"What is it that one hears about them?" she murmured. "There have been others

who have sought to discover their identity—others who are themselves silent now forever."

"The young man," Cammerley said thoughtfully, "is of a harmless type."

Brooke, as he stood there, was conscious of soft footsteps in the hall—footsteps which seemed to gather volume all the time, not the footsteps of one or two people, but the footsteps of dozens.

"You were looking for adventures, perhaps, my young friend," Cammerley continued. "You have been successful. Some one who visited me once remarked that this might well be a house of mysteries, so strangely situated in such a neighborhood. Perhaps it is. Look!"

He pushed the door a little further open. The hall seemed filled with men—men who were waiting patiently, men who exchanged not a syllable, pale-faced most of them, dressed in the garb of operatives, with something curious about them which, although he did not understand it, made Brooke shiver. Cammerley closed the door again.

"As I think you already knew before you came," he said quietly, "you are in the presence of the Silent People—Lucy Fragade and I myself. Those outside have also learned the gift of silence. They are some of those who do our bidding."

Brooke stared at the woman. The name was well enough known to him—Lucy Fragade, who had been expelled from Russia, imprisoned in America, imprisoned again in Germany, and forced to escape from France; the daughter of an anarchist, a woman who preached force and bloodshed with an eloquence which no man of her cause had ever approached. He recognized her from her portraits. She was gazing at him fixedly. She was more like them now than ever.

"There is a room at the back of this house," Cammerley continued, "into which others have been invited who have come as you have come, and the world has seen no more of them. The river flows within forty yards of my back door, and the tanyard is empty at night. I am afraid, Mr. Brooke, that the public will have to wait a little time for that interview with me which you proposed writing."

Brooke looked from one to the other. Up to the present moment, at any rate, he had felt no fear. Yet there was something a little disquieting in the expression with

which they regarded him; something ominous, too, in that sense of men waiting without. He remembered several disappearances lately. He knew suddenly that murder had been done in this place. Yet he was still without fear. Perhaps he was, to some extent, a fatalist. Death seemed to him always a thing so unlikely.

"I shall be missed," he remarked affably. "Miss Robinson knows that I have come to see you."

Cammerley nodded.

"The young lady who overheard our conversation at the Forward Club," he explained to Lucy. "It is a pity that she did not accompany you, sir."

"Perhaps," Brooke replied, "she is better where she is!"

The telephone-bell rang. Cammerley held the receiver to his ear.

"This is Mr. Cammerley speaking," he declared. "What can I do for you? Yes, Mr. Brooke is here. You are Miss Constance Robinson."

Brooke made a movement toward the telephone, but stopped.

"No, I am afraid that I cannot say," Cammerley continued, "what time Mr. Brooke will return. He will leave this room in a few minutes. As for the rest, it is difficult. Yes, I understand."

He listened for some time. His face showed no change of expression. He glanced toward the clock.

"Very well," he said, "the course you suggest will be quite agreeable to me. It would give me great pleasure to meet you personally. Yes, pray, come. As you say, it is only an affair of ten minutes in a taxicab."

Brooke sprang toward the telephone.

"She shall not come here!" he shouted.

Mr. Cammerley handed him the receiver.

"Really," he said, "you people are wasting a lot of our time this afternoon. Tell her yourself to keep away, then."

Brooke snatched the receiver.

"Miss Robinson!" he called out. "Constance, are you there? Constance!"

"Miss Robinson is here," was the calm reply.

"You are not to come to this man's house!" Brooke exclaimed. "If you do, don't come alone! You understand?"

"Quite well. There is probably a slight misunderstanding. *Au revoir!*"

"Listen!" Brooke begged.

The connection was gone. Cammerley

removed the instrument out of reach with a little sigh.

"My dear Mr. Brooke," he said, "the young lady is evidently accustomed to having her own way. Who can blame her? Miss Fragade is a little like that, too. Now how shall we spend the time until Miss Robinson arrives? Would you like to see around the place? Would you care to stroll through the tan-yard down to the river? There is a room here which Lucy calls our chamber of horrors. Perhaps you would like to see that? Or would you like to make the acquaintance of our bodyguard—fifty strange-looking men? Most of them now, I suppose, have gone back to their posts, but there will be a few remaining."

He swung open the door. There were a dozen men still in the hall, standing against the wall almost like statues. Their eyes were fixed upon Cammerley. They seemed ready to obey his slightest gesture. Brooke glanced at the door; Cammerley smiled.

"The only modern thing about the place," he remarked. "A double lock of really wonderful pattern. Would you like to see some of my books? Or would it amuse you to hear Lucy talk of her Continental experiences?"

The telephone-bell rang again. Cammerley spoke, apparently, to a whip in the House of Commons.

"I shall be in my place at four o'clock," Brooke heard him say. "The division, I suppose, is not likely to come on before dinner-time? Thank you!"

"An interesting thing, the telephone," he continued, replacing the receiver and turning to Brooke. "It seems to bring one so into touch with the outside world from the most impossible places, doesn't it? Ah, the taxicab! Stay here, please, Mr. Brooke. Miss Robinson will be properly received, without a doubt."

Constance was ushered into the room, a moment later, by the gray-haired woman who had admitted Brooke. She was, as usual, exceedingly quiet in her manner and very self-composed.

"It is Mr. Cammerley, is it not?" she inquired, holding out her hand. "And I am sure that this is Lucy Fragade? It is very interesting to meet you both."

Cammerley smiled.

"Without flattery," he remarked, "I may say that there have been many who have found it interesting."

Constance was standing between Lucy Fragade and Cammerley. She seemed very small.

"I have come," she announced, "to take Mr. Brooke back with me."

Lucy Fragade looked at her curiously. Cammerley smiled.

"Mr. Brooke was a little lonely," he said. "I have no doubt that he will find your coming of benefit to him."

"Ours must be only a flying visit," Constance continued quietly. "Before I go, there is a question I have wanted to ask Mr. Cammerley ever since I knew of his existence. This will probably be my only chance. Should I be too exacting if I begged for—say, thirty seconds in which to ask it?"

"I have no secrets," Cammerley replied. "Pray ask your question."

Constance looked at him intently.

"It was a question," she murmured, "which occurred to me first when I heard that Blanche Fragade was indeed—"

"Lucy Fragade," the woman interrupted.

Constance accepted the correction, but she did not at once continue. She was looking steadfastly at Cammerley. There was perhaps no one else in the room who noticed any change in him. Yet Brooke, who was nearest, and who found the temperature of the apartment on the cold side, was suddenly surprised to see two little drops of perspiration standing out on the man's forehead.

Cammerley looked toward the woman and said something to her in a tongue which neither Brooke nor Constance understood. She nodded and left the room. Cammerley leaned a little toward Constance as she passed out.

"Go on," he said.

"Is there any need?" she asked calmly. "I have a friend in Cyril Mansions. The letter is ready for the post—if we do not return."

Cammerley's face was, for a moment, like the face of a skeleton. His eyes shone large behind his spectacles. His lips had parted, showing his strong, yellow teeth.

"Your terms?" he whispered.

"This is not our affair," Constance said softly. "I was wrong to send him here," she added, motioning toward Brooke. "I, too, am of the people. So long as it is not life you take, he and I are silent."

Cammerley asked for no pledge. He understood. For a moment he listened.

Then he led the way toward the door. In the hall several shadowy figures came stealing toward them. He waved them back and opened the front door.

"You will find a taxicab at the corner," he said.

At the corner of the street they stopped to look around them. Brooke glanced back at the house they had left. Behind it was the tan-yard, and a little farther away they could see the masts in the river.

"A queer place," Constance observed composedly. "They say that he is a real philanthropist. His house is filled with all sorts of outcasts from the streets, to whom he gives temporary shelter. That is the reason he lives there."

"Is it?" Brooke replied dryly. "There is nothing would please me better than to go over it with half a dozen policemen at my back."

She shook her head.

"It is forbidden. I think those two people, mistaken though they may be,

represent things with which we do better not to interfere."

"At least," Brooke asked, "I may inquire who Blanche is?"

"But for Blanche," Constance told him, "I should never have suffered you to go to that man's house, because I know that they are suspicious of you and of me. Blanche is Lucy Fragade's sister. She left her home mysteriously some years ago. Lucy does not know where she is. Philip Cammerley does. There are only two things in life greater than that woman's devotion to her cause. One was her love for her sister; the other her passion for Cammerley. I should say that he was a man who feared but one thing in the world. When I spoke he saw the possibility of it."

Brooke handed her into a taxicab.

"There seems to be a weak spot in the life of every strong man," he remarked, "and that weak spot is always a woman. Even with myself—"

"Don't talk nonsense!" she interrupted.

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THE CLEANSING SEA

BY JOHN FLEMING WILSON

I MET him by the water-tank just outside of Minadoka, high up on the table-lands of Idaho. He shuffled out from behind an old box car which had served as a lodging-house for a long-departed gang of Japanese, and held out his shaking hand. In the grimy paw I placed tobacco and papers.

He rolled his cigarette and scratched the match on the rail. And then I saw that I was in the company of a man who had once been really a man and had descended into the depths.

"What are you doing in Idaho?" I demanded.

He puffed hurriedly, blew the smoke upward, and stared at me a moment.

"Where is Idaho?" he demanded.

Laughable as the question was, I answered it. When I was done he turned his warm brown eyes to the dim, brown hills and contemplated them.

"Then it's two days back to salt water?"

Under the grime and dust and inbitten filth I caught a mere tinge of the color that is burned into a man only on the sea. Putting this with the fact that he did not tack a "sir" to his speeches, I turned the matter silently over. Was he a broken skipper? Or was he—

"Which direction?" the man snapped, all his apathy gone.

I pointed westward along the rails.

"How long d'ye suppose it would take me to fetch back to some port?"

"San Francisco?"

The apathy returned.

"Oh, I don't care—doesn't matter, y' know," he said.

"What was your last ship?" I demanded.

"The junk Whang-Ho," he mumbled, puffing sharply on his cigarette.

We looked each other in the eye. I said curtly:

"That is the name of a Chinese war-junk, and they've been looking for her six years. Is it six years?"

"Four—Manzanillo it was where I—I quit her."

"Then your name isn't Garrett?"

"No. I was his mate."

"There is a train for Portland in precisely fifteen minutes. If you'll allow me—a loan?"

He glanced down at his rags and his hands ingrained with dirt. Then he threw his cap into the sage-brush and stepped alertly beneath the dripping spout of the tank. Ten minutes thereafter he was fairly clean, and I was whipping the dust from his jacket. Five minutes later he looked at me as I slipped into a seat in the smoker and muttered:

"I've been bathing every day in the irrigation ditch. D'ye mind?"

He sat down, spread his large hands on his knees, and sighed.

Now the story he told me—which is only part of what I have to tell—ran dribblingly along for five hundred miles. It began when I had settled for his fare and offered him a cigar.

"Mexican, I see," he murmured.

"How long since you left Manzanillo?" I inquired.

"About a year," he answered.

"But you quit the Whang-Ho, you say, four years ago?"

"Yes. But I always went back to Manzanillo, y' know."

Let us be brief—there was a woman.

II

My hobo's name was Richard Covenne, and at one time he had been as far up in the O. and O. line as chief officer of the Mariposa. Then he had married a woman in Auckland, had found that she had another husband living, and had gone to sea on a schooner. Thenceforth he had led the usual roving seafarer's life until one day, in San Francisco, he had heard that

they were looking for a mate for the Chinese war-junk Whang-Ho, which had been brought over to exhibit at an exposition. He went over to Sausalito and had a look over her.

"The old packet was sound as a nail, and somehow I liked the smell of her," he told me. "She was bound back to China with her old brass cannon and her oiled decks and her bamboo-stretched sails. Looked like a bit of a lark. I signed on. There was Garrett and me for white men and officers, and the rest were a lot of Chinese."

It appeared that the Whang-Ho sailed out of the Golden Gate one fine morning's ebb, and Garrett laid his course for Honolulu.

"No need of keepin' too far away from steak and onions when it's rice and curry and dried fish here," the skipper had remarked.

Then they found that the old junk sailed according to her own fashion, learned in a couple of centuries' handling by yellow-faced, blueberry eyed Mongolians. Five miles beyond the Southeast Farallone Garrett hailed an incoming fishing-tug, dropped his dunnage into a small boat, grinned maliciously at his mate, and rowed away.

"He'd had his advance, y' know," said Covenne. "I stuck. I couldn't see any reason why I should quit. I'd been paid to take that bally junk somewhere, and I intended to tough the thing through."

For forty days Covenne tried to get an offing from the California coast; a persistent nor'wester, coupled with an enormous tidal drift, balked him. When he gave up he was eighty miles outside the Santa Barbara Channel, and the trades still held.

"So I had a confab with the bo's'n—and a bully chink he was, too, but with no knowledge of navigation—and he said: 'Come back Untitled Stlates, all go to jail. Mexico all lightee.' So I says, 'Mexico goes, my bucko. And we'll make it Manzanillo.'"

"Y' know," he said during his narrative, "the coast of Lower California is no place for strange packets. So I just stood ahead, and lemme inform you, my friend, that the old Whang-Ho could travel some when it was a pinch. We stormed down to San Lucas, crossed the gulf like a soap-bubble before a breeze, and then rocked

along into a gentle kind of sea that didn't have much wind. And then I found out about sailing a junk—she's a wizard and a witch and their whole family of imps in a light breeze. That tumblebug of a hooker would steer within a point of the wind—old Woo Hop tending the sheets—and with a four-knot breeze she'd log six. And so we came to Manzanillo."

According to Covenne's tale, there was a good bit of discussion as to what course they were to take when they arrived in port; but they determined at last to run and simply report that they were the junk Hop Sing Wo, out for sharks, and make their plans later.

The port authorities, who were used to all kinds of craft dropping in without saying much, didn't see anything to excite themselves about in one more junk, and Covenne let the wooden anchor descend into the warm waters just off the railroad bridge across the slough's mouth. Then Covenne and Woo Hop sat down for three days to figure on means of getting the Whang-Ho back to Swatow, where she belonged.

"We guessed we could make it by simply following the latitudes," my companion told me. "You see, Woo Hop liked me because I'd stuck with 'em; and when a chink really thinks you're all right he'll trust you all the way. So I spent about thirty dollars of my own money buying more rice, filled up the water-tanks again, bought a couple of tons of coal for the galley, and then said to Woo Hop:

"I guess I'll drop ashore to-night for a little holiday."

III

FROM this point on Covenne's yarn became a mere dribble. But it seemed that that first night on shore, while he was climbing the hill above the station to get the bearings of the various points, he met a girl. She was young and pretty, sophisticated and coquettish.

It was ten o'clock next morning when Covenne woke up from his *pulque* sleep, rubbed his burning eyes, and peered out to the junk. He was lying on the grits of the railroad-track, where he had fallen the night before. He had missed the tide.

However, he rode out to the junk again, slept off the remainder of his inebriety, wakened at four o'clock, and or-

dered Woo Hop to set sail. Till eight o'clock they tried to work the Whang-Ho outside, failed, drifted back to their anchorage, and again Covenne went ashore.

Again he met the girl on the hill, and once more he wakened in the morning with dry throat and aching head, this time on the steps of a church. By great effort he managed to keep awake all day and tried to get the junk outside.

"The old packet couldn't make it," he told me. "I just roused the laughter of all the other people in the harbor. For a month I met the girl every night, while old Woo Hop mooned on the junk and said nothing. Patient chaps, those chinks! Then one afternoon we caught a new current and fetched out. The sea was a kind of dirty gray, and Woo Hop opined a storm was coming.

"Let her blow," says I at first.

"Then I took a look around at the coast, and—I remembered the girl and put back. Good excuse, too, for it blew a nasty gale all that night. Then I fetched out once more with fair weather ahead and all well aloft and aloft.

"The Whang-Ho dragged along like a sick child. Woo Hop kept looking over-side, and the rest of the crew seemed to think something was wrong. Finally, that night, when it was all phosphorescent in the water, I slung myself over the side and had a look myself. Say, you never saw anything like it! We were making a poor two knots an hour, and down under that pot-bellied junk was a whole forest upside down of bushes and trees and flowers on fire. Y' see, we'd been so long lying there in Manzanillo that the weeds on our bottom had got a good growth; and there they were in the phosphorescence, waving and squirming and blowing and glowing as we crawled along.

"I yelled up for Woo Hop to come down, and he did. He stared a long time and merely said:

"No can do."

"So we turned our craft about and crawled back into Manzanillo to beach and clean. It was a sure thing if we didn't clean the junk's bottom we'd never reach the coast of China. So we found a nice shelving beach, hauled her up, let the tide run out from under, and got to work scrubbing and hoeing, and even with knives, getting the barnacles and weeds off. That took three days. It took another day to

haul the Whang-Ho off, and then—I had to go and see the girl again.”

So far as I could make out, the war-junk stayed another fortnight in the harbor before Covenne finally managed to get her to sea again. This time he was eighty miles on his way when he found in his room, in the pocket of his shore-going jacket, a little crucifix that the girl had given him. He stared at that token of world-wide faith for an hour before he thrust it into his shirt-pocket and went on deck.

It was an almost windless night, with soft, red stars above and the glimmer of the phosphorescence on the western horizon.

“It got inky black at midnight, with no stars at all for the chinks to steer by, and I changed the course back to Manzanillo,” he told me. “Couldn’t help it. I was going back to marry that girl.”

Those who do not know the imperturbable patience of the Chinese might be astounded that the crew of the Whang-Ho did not mutiny. But Covenne informed me that he bought them fresh rice all around, and tobacco, and a little *pulque*, and they said never a word. He went ashore and married the girl—he never mentioned her name.

He stayed on shore a week, sober and inordinately proud of his new wife. He described her—tall, extremely dark even for that country, luster-eyed, sinuous, changing hourly from mad moods of wild passion to soft and dreamy lassitude. When he went back to the junk he told Woo Hop he was going to quit, but would get the junk another commander.

Woo Hop had silently gone to the side and spat.

“So I quit,” Covenne went on. “And it was eighteen months later before a drunken Austrian took the Whang-Ho to sea. Meanwhile I—”

It was hard to follow his evidently garbled account of his experiences during the next four years. In a year his wife had left him for another man—a Mexican. For another year Covenne spent his days between wild debauches and efforts to get her to come back. Then a sense of the shameful of it all stung him to action; he left Manzanillo, and finally landed as time-keeper in a mine at Altair. But he stayed there only five months. The drag of his passion for that miserable woman drew him irresistibly back to Manzanillo,

where he wasted his earnings in the wildest drunkenness.

I had seen him in Idaho just when he had waked up from a three nights’ carousal following a trip through a country that he could not identify, with a band of sheepherders. He was broke, shaking with nervousness, and—still master of himself.

While the long train of Pullmans slowed down for the bridge across the Willamette at Portland he closed his recital with a sigh as he looked out on the river crowded with seagoing craft:

“If I could have got to sea I’d have been all right—and it’s six years gone!”

IV

I WAS bound for San Pedro within two days, and I took Covenne over to the big Beaver and my friend Tom Allen, the bo’s’n. To him I explained in twenty words.

“Right-o!” said Tom. “I’ll put him in the refrigerator for you and work him to death. Good seaman, you say?”

I whispered while Covenne stared at the huge top-structure of the liner with shrewd, appraising eyes. Allen nodded gravely and then called gently to Covenne.

The next morning the Beaver had shifted to the flouring-mills at Albina. I got Allen on the phone. His words were cheering. Chief Officer Seike would give him a berth for the voyage as quartermaster.

But that night, when the Beaver was back at her dock, Allen had bad news.

“He sniffed that rotten wind that blows down the street and beat it. Said he’d be back; but—”

I found him at midnight, sullen, half drunk, ugly to deal with. He glared at me.

“Ye got me here. D’ye expect me to stand for this?”

“The ship sails at nine in the morning,” I told him. “Are you willing to wait just twelve hours to be on blue water?”

He looked at me with a strange glance, and then rose from his chair by the filthy table.

“I used to haul my men out of these dives myself once upon a time,” he said in a new tone. “I don’t know why I ever left the sea.” A sudden tremendous passion poured into his tones: “I should never have seen a woman!”

He went back to the ship, and Allen re-

ceived him gruffly, but made no comments. The next morning, as I passed up the gangplank behind a crowd of passengers, I saw him on station. He nodded as I passed, but made no advance to speak to me.

I next saw him on the wharf at Astoria, glumly considering the thronging passengers. A couple of roistering sailors from a cannery ship were joking and laughing over by the big gates. Covenne's eyes were on them. He observed them sternly, appraisingly. He seemed to swell in his uniform. He showed himself as the officer who resents such behavior when a ship's business is being done.

Then I saw a girl slip through the gates—faintly pretty, evidently pallid from the night life of some dance-hall. And in the instant that Covenne saw her there surged slowly up into his face the flush of a man who is ashamed. He looked away. She caught that silent disapproval and pertly stepped up and looked at him with inviting eyes.

"Pretty clothes, old pal!" she said, swaying an infinitesimal distance backward.

All the wickedness, the weak, miserable, squalid vileness of our civilization was in her voice and posture. It was like a rending of the veil that hid the smiling hill city's foundations, as if for that instant the abyss had opened under the happy throng of passengers with picture post-cards and letters in their hands.

Covenne trembled on the brink of the pit. His eyes suddenly reflected the evil in the girl's. His officerlike poise and stern air vanished. He sniffed the polluted air from the street above, glanced down at his uniform, stiffened, and then instinctively felt in his closely buttoned pocket. He was feeling to see how much money he had for drinks and dances.

He caught my eye and looked at me defiantly. He knew that I knew that the vileness of our wickedness is that one can get nothing without the price—the price of toil and labor and strife with a world that yields us money grudgingly. But he was strong even in his weakness, even in his bending to the call of contamination and sin. His eyes were the eyes of knowledge. And the girl waited for him to throw up his life for a paltry hour's drinking and listening to tin-pot music, waiting with her almost imperceptible prettiness, her studied

allure of posture, her mocking eyes that said:

"Come and throw away all that you are to-night that to-morrow you may die!"

Big ships are not run by fools. Even as I stood helpless, Chief Officer Seike came along and said curtly:

"Quartermaster, take the wheel!"

There was a moment's pause. The girl glanced wickedly at the officer. Covenne stood motionless for a second. Then the sea called him, the summons of duty and terrific toil broke through the entrancement of evil passion. He saluted and stepped off—once more a man.

"Doesn't look well for the crew to be listening to that kind," Seike mumbled, and passed on.

V

Two hours later I rounded the pilot-house into the strong breath of the southerly wind we were rushing into and glanced up. I saw Covenne's steady eyes fixed on the running surges. As I passed, unseen, I saw him bend his head slightly to look at the compass. The sea held him.

When the Beaver lay at Pier 40 in San Francisco, and the through passengers were getting their keys from the steward and demanding directions as to sightseeing, Covenne came up to me on the forward deck and mumbled that he wished to see me. I followed him to his quarters. He turned on me there.

"My ticket needs renewing," he said quickly. "The mate has given me a little liberty to go to the inspectors and see about it."

"I'll go with you," I replied.

When we reached the inspector's offices he had forced me to allow him a couple of drinks; but they seemed to have steadied him, for when he stepped into the big office which represents the heart of all that means safety and expertness and trustworthiness on the high seas and along the coasts, he strode in as one going among his equals. While he was explaining to the inspector that he had lost his ticket and wished a new one, and the chief clerk was searching the records, he spoke with an authority and a firmness that caused several men to look curiously at him. In the end he answered a dozen questions, proved his identity, and received his new certificate.

"What are you doing now, captain?"

asked the inspector as he handed him the gray-looking document that represents the sum of a man's life of labor.

Without a flush Covenne answered:

"Quartermaster on the Beaver, sir."

"A good ship," said the inspector cordially. "Plenty of ships waiting for masters, captain."

"I hope to get one presently," was the response, and we passed out.

I followed his course for six months. Then he vanished from the bridge of the Yale, whose officers could tell me nothing about him. Later I found him in a flashy restaurant in Seattle. He informed me stiffly that he was chief mate of the Clallum, trading to Alaska. He did not offer to introduce me to the bejeweled woman who sat opposite him at table.

For another six months I heard nothing of him. Then I took passage on the barkantine Irmgarde for Lahaina, and whom should I see on watch as mate but Covenne. We smoked a pipe together in his room. He confessed that Alaskan ports had been too much for him.

"But now I'm on deep water again," he said slowly. "And"—he looked at me calmly—"I'll stick by the sea!"

On board the barkantine was a passenger whose name did not fit her. She was one of those strays who drift back and forth across the Pacific until suddenly—like an unseaworthy ship—they vanish. She was bent on fascinating Covenne. He resisted her wiles and paid strict attention to business till one night, when the wind was warm and the sails asleep, I saw him quietly steal down to the main-deck and talk to her—a perfectly permissible thing, as he was off watch.

But I also saw his face as he came up on the quarter-deck an hour before the time to take over the watch. It was the face of a man who sees far into the future, who hears the calls of strange voices, the lure of siren murmurs. He clasped the rail in his strong brown hands and stood there, staring out into the dim, vague distances of the sea. Once in a while he would shake his head impatiently.

At last the watch was called. He went

through the formalities, nodded to me as he peered into the binnacle, and then scanned the sails with an alert, almost frightened look. The port watch departed noisily and the ship settled down to sleep.

I was dozing in my chair when I suddenly wakened to hear a woman's voice. It was answered by Covenne's deep tones. Then I heard:

"You're not good company to-night. I'm disappointed in you."

"Yes; I'm not good company," the mate answered.

She talked on purringly. Suddenly Covenne reached into his jacket-pocket and handed her something. I saw her step over and hold the article under the faint gleam of the binnacle light. She laughed lightly.

"What do I need of a crucifix?"

He took it from her outstretched hand and groaned.

"No one understands," he muttered.

Then his whistle sounded shrilly. The boatswain responded grumblingly.

"Bo's'n," said Covenne quietly, "please keep the ship on her course."

He turned to the woman, who looked at him mockingly, her posture in the vague light serpentine and wheedling.

"You don't need it," he said. "I do. It will always be with me."

"A pious man!" she giggled. "I thought you were too clever!"

For an instant Covenne stared out on the gently heaving sea. Then he threw out his firm hand in a magnificent and inclusive gesture.

"You don't understand this," he said. "It's the clean sea! You don't belong here—nobody but the sea and God can live with this!"

Thrusting the crucifix into his jacket-pocket, he stepped down to the main-deck, to the rail, and thence slipped into the sea.

Amid the rattle of blocks and shouted orders as we uselessly brought the barkantine about, the woman cried hysterically on the quarter-deck:

"What did he do it for? What did he do it for?"

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Popular Geography



MEXICO

by Svetozar Tonjoroff

UP to the minute of going to press the story of Mexico is the story of a long struggle for readjustment that opened with Cortez and the Conquistadores. When Fletcher

landed his marines at Vera Cruz in April, 1914, he faced the task of putting an end to the chaos which was brought to the home of the Aztecs by Cortez and his galleons in April, 1519. The interval from Cortez to Fletcher is a reign of oppression and injustice under a pall of smoke from burning cities, broken now and then by a brief flash of patriotism or administrative efficiency. When will Fletcher's task end—and where? That is the question which is impairing the after-dinner repose of European statesmen all the way from St. Petersburg to Madrid, by way of London, Paris, and Berlin. For it is recalled in the chancelleries that Fletcher is marching on the road which was traversed by Cortez at the time of the conquest, by the French in 1839, by Winfield Scott in 1847, by the allies in 1861, by Maximilian in 1864—that road

from the City of the True Cross to the City of Mexico, which is drenched with the blood of armies. All these marched back again to Vera Cruz—all but Maximilian, who came from Miramar as emperor and died facing a firing squad on the hill of Las Campañas.

Lord Salisbury, in a memorable address at a lord mayor's banquet a few years before his death, spoke of "the waste places of the earth." Under this classification the prime minister of England roughly grouped those countries which had demonstrated an incapacity for self-government and self-development. In that contemptuous category he did not include Mexico—for Mexico at that time was under the iron hand of President Diaz, the taciturn old Indian whose nod meant death to any disturber of the peace. Had Lord Salisbury lived until this year of grace he might well have included Mexico within the scope of his now historic phrase.

When the lid blew off after thirty years of Roman peace and hurled Diaz into luxurious retirement in Europe, the world looked into the hissing caldron of Mexican

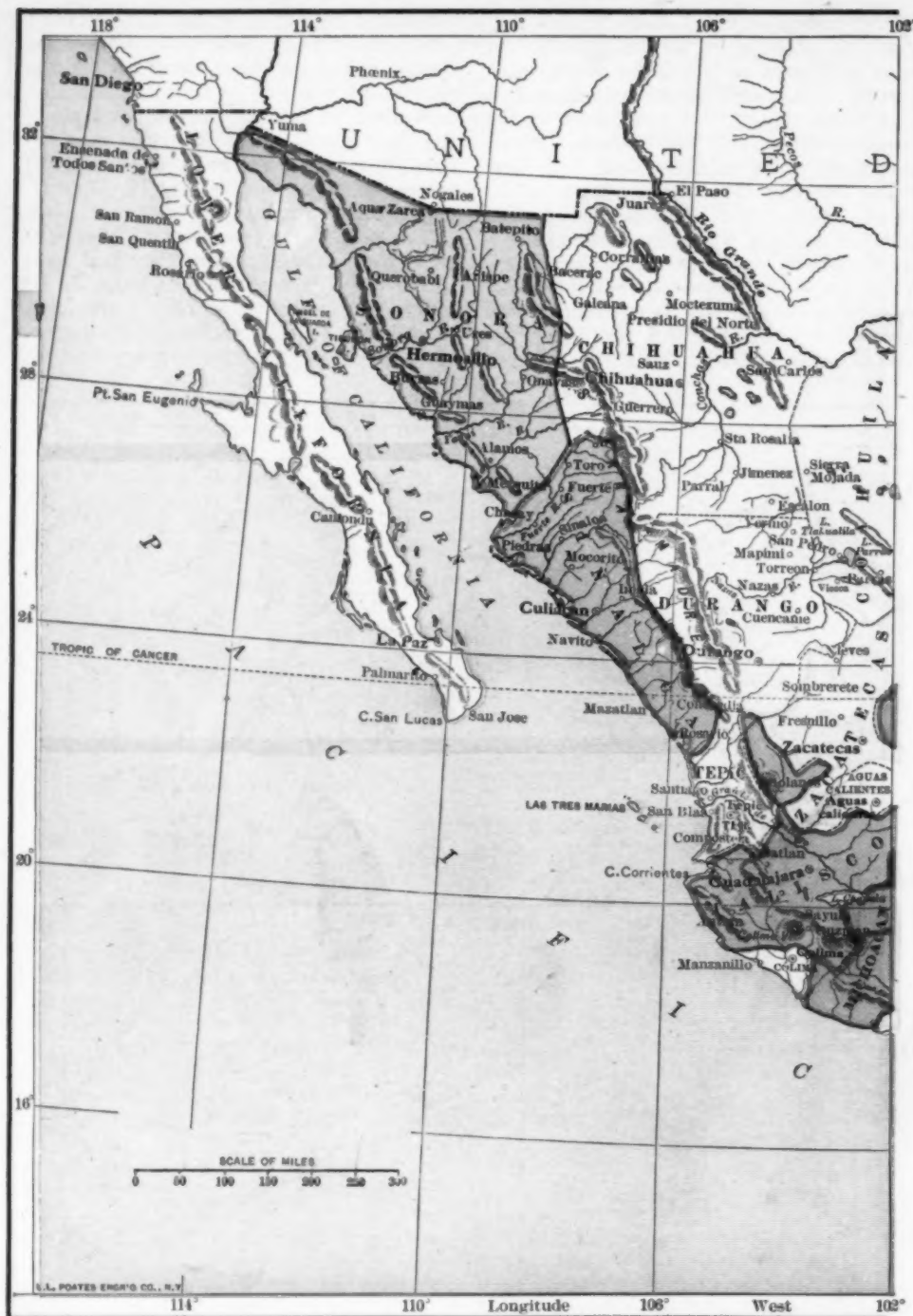
affairs and discovered that Mexico had made so slight a forward step since the days of Cortez as not to be worth mentioning. True, an impressive addition had been made to the visible resources of the republic during the Diaz régime. Many thousands of miles of railroad had been built, bringing the total trackage up to 18,000 miles. But these roads had been built—and their bonds are still owned—by foreigners, for the most part Americans. Vast petroleum properties had been developed in the states of Vera Cruz and San Luis Potosi. But these properties are owned by the Standard interests, by Lord

Cowdray's syndicate, by the Waters-Pierce people, by Edward Doheny, of California. Copper mines had been developed in the state of Mexico and in Lower California; coal-mines in Sonora, Mexico, and along the lower Rio Grande. But these developments, too, were the work of foreigners, earning dividends on foreign investments, chiefly American.

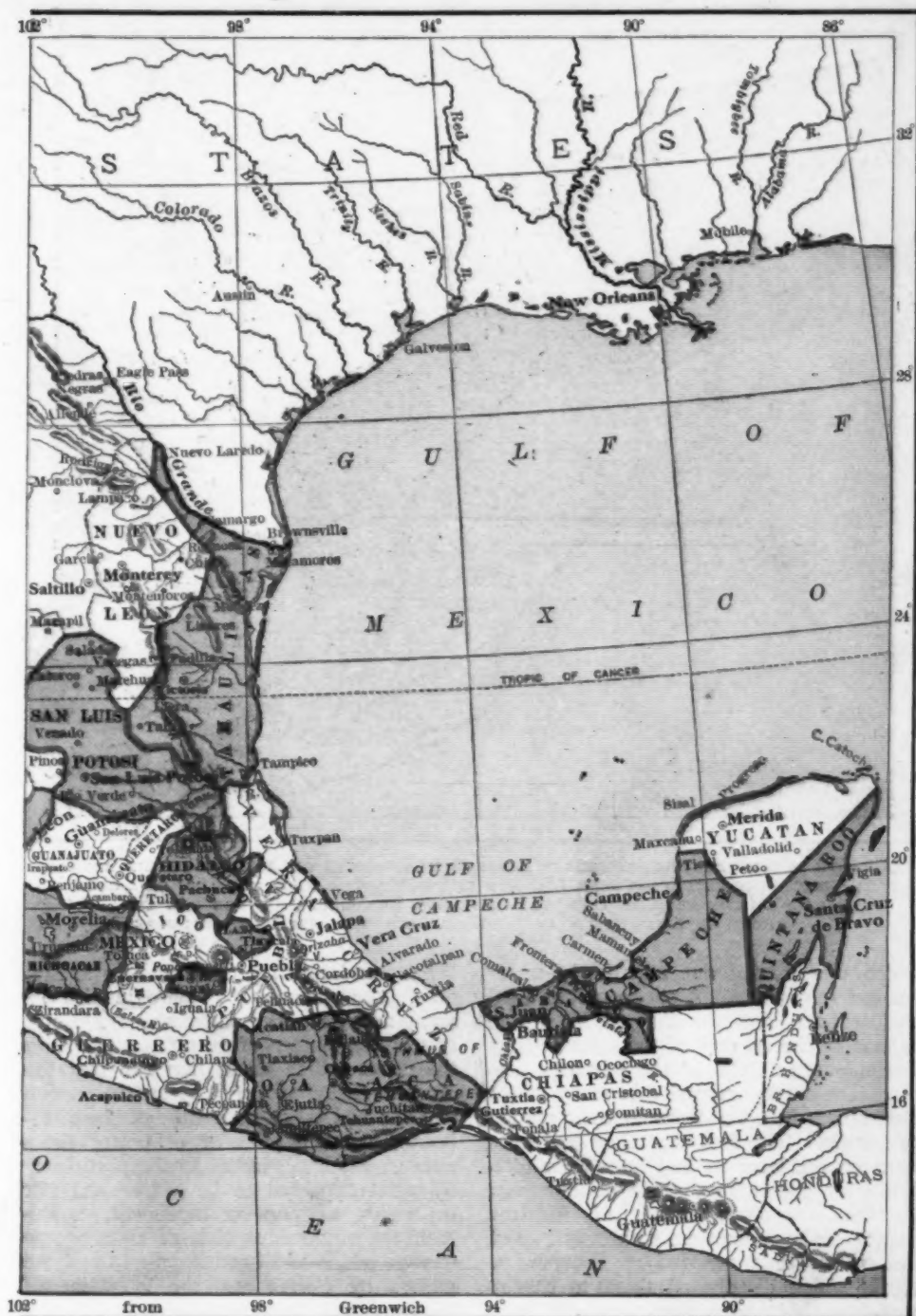
The peons—the peasantry of Mexico—were just as badly off as they had been in the early days of the conquest. To be exact, they were worse off. Some keen mind in the Palacio Nacional had hit upon the happy expedient of a new exploitation,



HOW THE REBEL ARMIES HAVE BEEN ADVANCING STEADILY SOUTHWARD AND EASTWARD ON THEIR MARCH TO MEXICO CITY. WHEN THE ORDER OF MOBILIZATION WAS ISSUED TO THE NAVY BY PRESIDENT WILSON, THE CONSTITUTIONALISTS (REBELS) HELD ALL THE TERRITORY MARKED ABOVE IN GREEN



THE PACIFIC AND THE ATLANTIC COASTS OF MEXICO, SHOWING A LONG EXPANSE OF SEABOARD CON—
AND TAMPIO ARE THE PRINCIPAL GATEWAYS OF EXPORT AND IMPORT. THE—
AND INTERVENTION THROUGHOUT—



- TAINING VAST RESOURCES, DEVELOPED CHIEFLY BY AMERICAN CAPITAL. THE PORTS OF VERA CRUZ
- ROAD FROM VERA CRUZ TO MEXICO CITY HAS BEEN THE ROUTE OF INVASION
- THE HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY

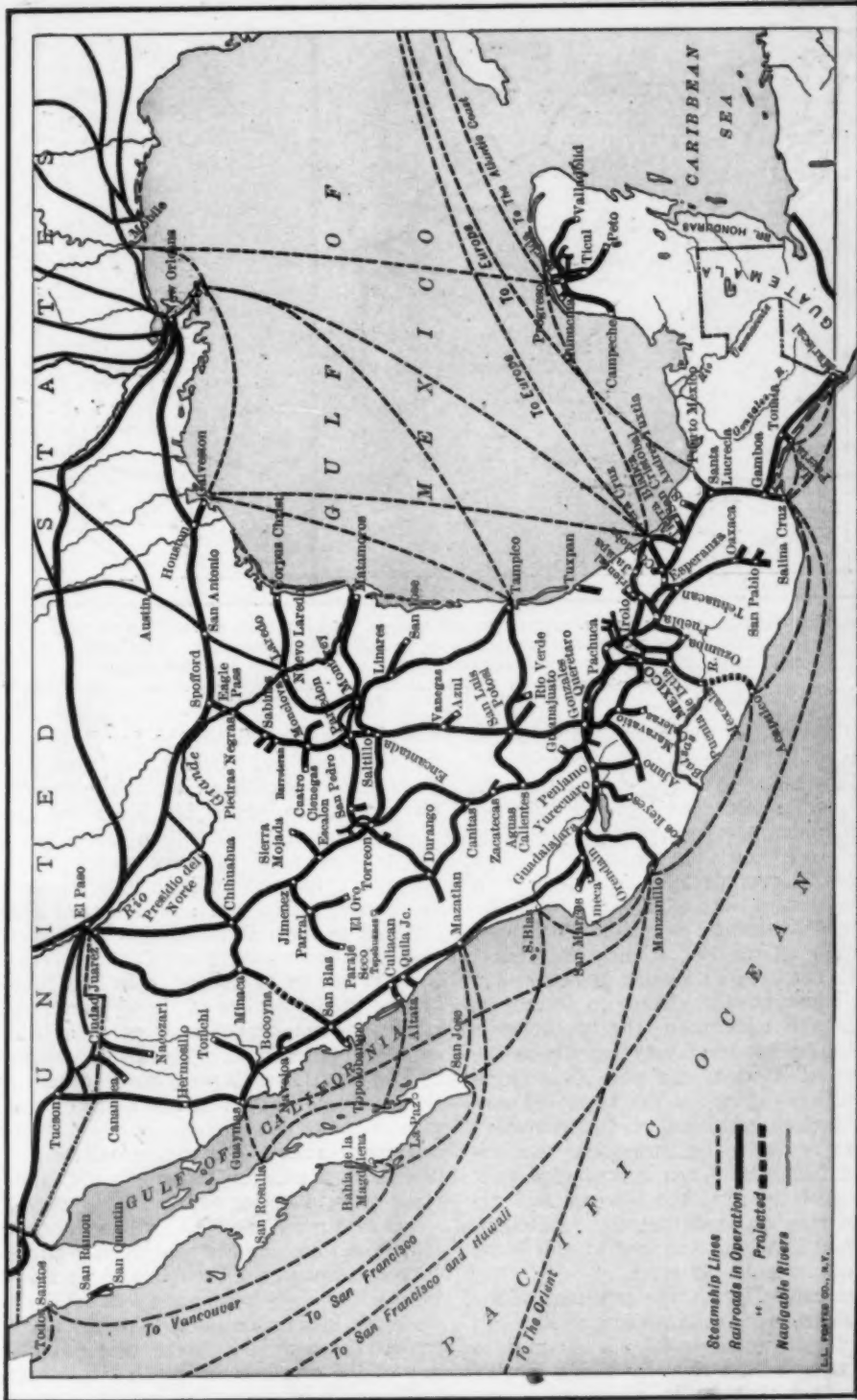


HEREWITH IS INDICATED THE PROGRESS OF AMERICAN EXPANSION AT THE EXPENSE OF THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC. THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1836 AND 1848 WAS NOTABLE FOR THE LOSS OF A GOOD HALF OF THE ORIGINAL TERRITORY OF MEXICO, INCLUDING WHAT ARE NOW THE STATES OF TEXAS, NEW MEXICO, ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, NEVADA AND UTAH

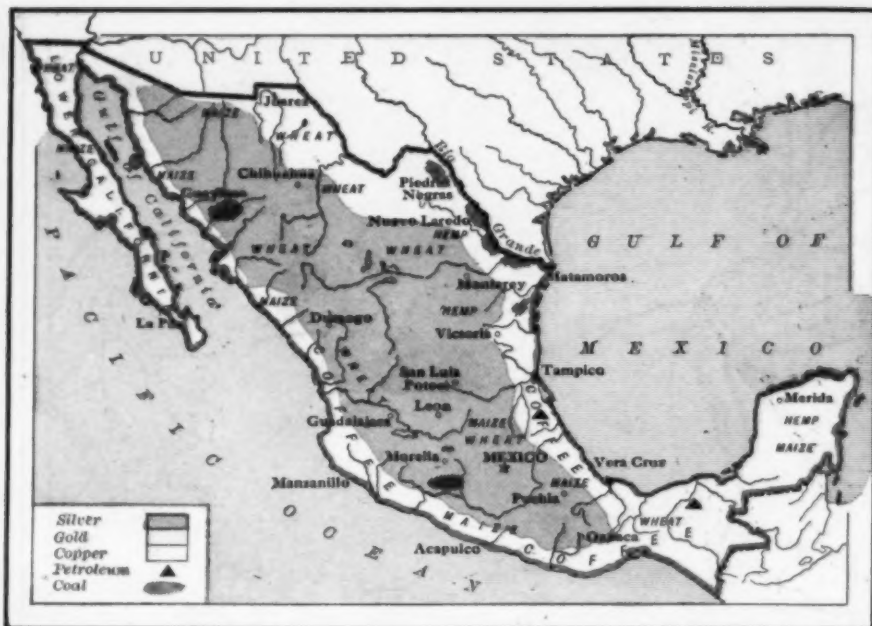
which was carried out relentlessly under the orders of Diaz. A survey of the land was ordered from the City of Mexico to determine the validity of the titles held by the submerged half of the Mexican people. The survey showed that many of the landowners held no deeds to their modest properties. The fact that they had been born on the land, as had been their forebears for generations, made no difference to the scrupulous agents of Mexican justice. The peons were ruthlessly ousted, and their lands reverted to the government, which distributed them to concessionaires able and willing to pay.

Under Diaz, as under Cortez, the bulk of the Mexican people found themselves reduced to a condition of practical slavery.

What wonder that when Francisco I. Madero, Jr., an aristocrat of pure Spanish descent and American university traditions, raised the banner of revolt against Diaz the peons rallied about him and rent the air with their "vivas!" After the cannon of Diaz had taken their title of the disinherited came a glimmer of better times ahead. Madero, elected to the presidency by what appeared to be a free and fair expression of popular sentiment, undertook the stupendous task of righting the wrongs which had been imposed upon the masses by Cortez and the long line of viceroys and their republican or imperial successors down to Diaz. A new survey of the land was made. The false millennium was ushered in by the announcement



THE ROUTES OF TRANSPORTATION BY LAND AND SEA. MEXICO HAS ABOUT 18,000 MILES OF RAILROAD IN OPERATION. PRACTICALLY EVERY MILE IS OWNED BY FOREIGN BONDHOLDERS



DISTRIBUTION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF MEXICO, AS PARTIALLY DEVELOPED SO FAR.
 PRACTICALLY ALL OF THE MINERAL WEALTH OF THE COUNTRY IS UNDER FOREIGN CONTROL, AND CONTRARY TO THE GENERAL IMPRESSION, AMERICANS ARE THE MOST POWERFUL SINGLE FACTOR IN THE FINANCING OF THESE ENTERPRISES

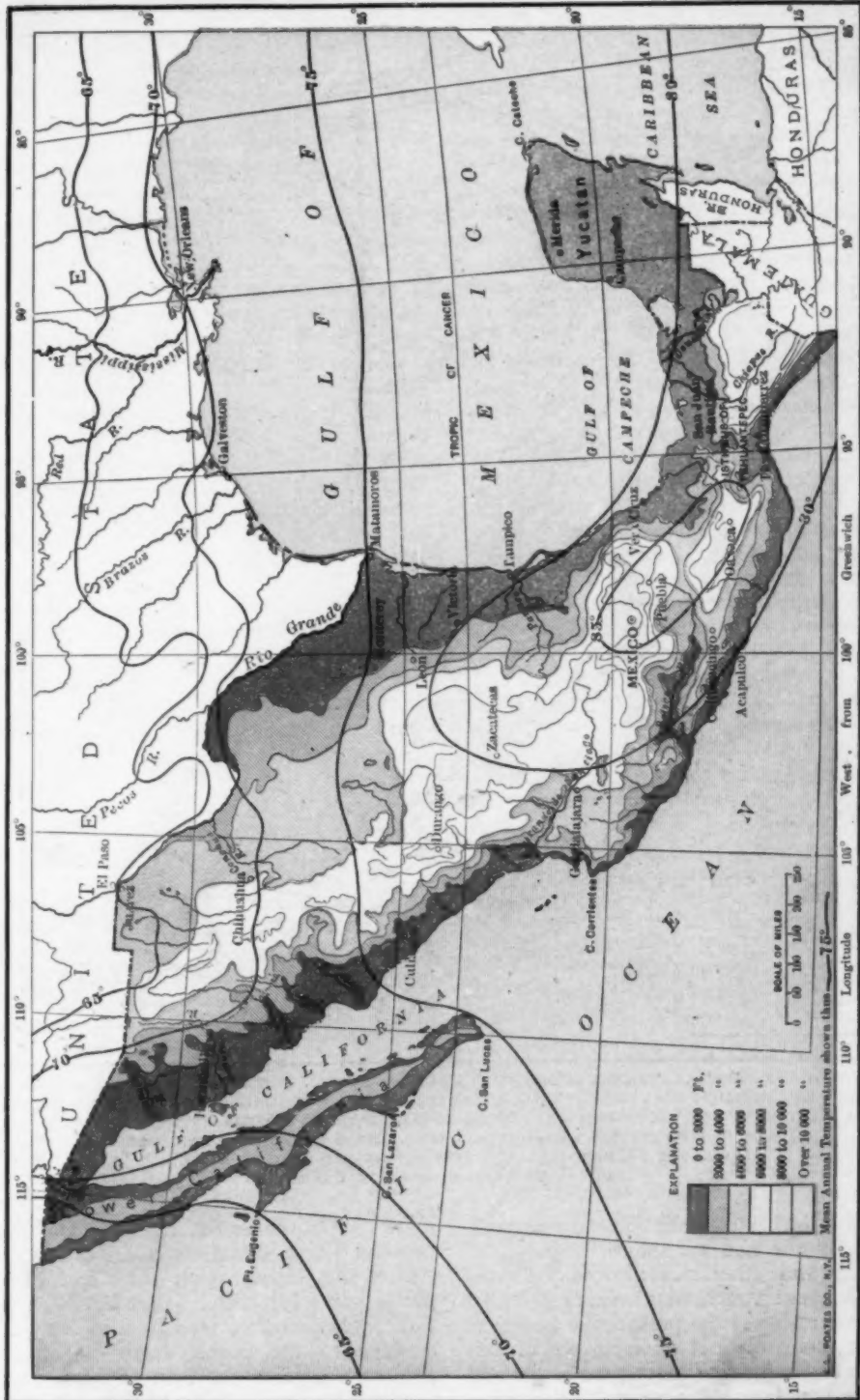
that there would be a redistribution of landed property; that the "*científicos*" would be made to disgorge, and that the downtrodden descendants of the Aztecs—well-nigh the most impoverished people on earth—would come to their own.

There is every reason to believe that Madero meant just what he said. Madero was an idealist, even if he did happen to be one of the richest men in Mexico. Had he not been an idealist Huerta would never have got the chance to have him shot in the back when the proper time came. But whatever may have been the motives of Madero, the new distribution of land worked out in the same old way which had characterized its unaccountable changes of ownership throughout the history of Mexico. When it was all over it was discovered that the landless still remained landless, and that the concessionaires had somehow managed to gobble up most of the available acres.

Then came Huerta, the exponent of the *Ley Fuga*, that characteristic Mexican legal device which enables a dictator to make away with a rival by killing him on the pretext that he is trying to escape

from his guards. When the *Ley Fuga* had done its work and Madero had fallen face downward in the street, Victoriano Huerta started out to apply his ideas for the amelioration of the condition of the poor. The poor are silent as to the results. They are silent for the sufficient reason that everybody within reach of Huerta's arm has had to keep silent. Huerta's conception of the functions of a constitution, there is reason to believe, coincides thoroughly with the view of the cynical Russian statesman who announced at the congress of Berlin, in 1878, when criticism had been made of a ready-made constitution designed for an infant state on the ground that it was far too liberal: "Excellencies, remember that a constitution is like the seal on a champagne bottle; it is made only to be broken."

Yet it must not be supposed that Huerta did nothing whatever for the peons—the peasantry, the backbone of a people. Only a few days before President Wilson made his historic declaration to the country on the necessity for prompt recognition of the arrest of American bluejackets at Tampico, a press despatch told of a



THIS CHART SHOWS THE WONDERFUL DIVERSITY OF MEXICAN ALTITUDE, AND CONSEQUENTLY OF CLIMATE, RANGING FROM TROPICAL TO COLD

is our duty, as I see it, to give them trousers."

The incident plainly indicated some progress since the days of Diaz. It is remembered that Diaz never troubled himself about furnishing trousers to the untrousered peons. He contented himself with issuing strict orders to the police of the City of Mexico to debar from the select walk of the Alameda all natives who were not equipped with the conventional nether garb of civilization.

And yet hope dies hard, in nations as in men. After the performances of the administrations of Diaz, of Madero, and of Huerta had sufficiently demonstrated to the bulk of the people of Mexico that they have nothing to expect from revolutions except the sorry privilege of serving as food for cannon, the lurid star of Villa, rising in the north, illuminated a new prospect of relief. Once more the peons—descendants of those same peons who had laid their bones in the deserts for Hidalgo and Santa Ana and Iturbide and Juarez and Gonzalez and Diaz—rallied to the new cry of justice and liberty upon the lips of a red-handed bandit.

Villa's victorious progress southward disclosed in dramatic fashion one of the chronic causes of discord among the Mexican people. When Villa, an Indian, took Chihuahua, he drove the Spanish residents of the town—that is, all those he did not kill on the spot—away in short order and confiscated their property. He did the same thing in Juarez, the same thing at Torreon, and at all intermediate points. Wherever the flag of the Constitutionalists was run up there followed bitter persecution of the Spaniards. The bandit-conqueror's excesses roused the men of his army to a high pitch of enthusiasm.

Villa's forces are recruited mostly from among the Indians. Now the Indian hates the Spaniard in Mexico with a ferocious hatred. The race-memories of oppression and cruelty by the Conquistadores is bred deeply in the blood of the peon. He recalls the burnings, the tortures, and the extortion which the bloody Cortez imposed upon a gentle people, and which his successors perpetuated down to yesterday. Whenever the peon gets the upper hand the rights of the Spaniard are not worth talking about.

Thus it will be seen that the racial issue is one of the vital problems of government

in Mexico. This race-hatred greatly complicates the economic puzzle which has baffled solution through the centuries since the conquest. The pure-blooded Spaniard, in the beginning because of his position as conqueror, and subsequently by means of his superior intelligence and his more highly developed commercial sense, has always managed to acquire more than his share of property. This concentration of wealth continues until it is dissipated by a popular eruption. Wealth, however, like water, always seeks its level, in Mexico as elsewhere. The result of the operation of this natural law is that after the eruption has subsided the Spaniard is almost invariably apt to restore the previous condition of affairs. Then comes another attempt at readjustment and another restoration of the same old material predominance of the Spaniard over the Indian. When it is remembered that two-thirds of the people of Mexico are either full-blooded Indians or *mestizos*, it will be realized that this racial-economic struggle is destined to continue indefinitely until either one side or the other in the desperate conflict is annihilated.

Is it possible, then, to imagine a time when the republic beyond the Rio Grande will attain a condition of permanent order and permanent harmony? Is it possible to imagine a time when a dominant figure—the strong man whom all nations produce in their time of need—will arise in Mexico to weld the warring racial elements into a homogeneous unit, capable of learning the lessons of self-government? The answer to these questions will determine the ultimate future of Mexico. More than that, it may determine the extent of the operations which were begun by President Wilson when he ordered the sea-power of the United States to Mexican ports in April.

In the States bordering upon Mexico they have a well-defined idea of what the future will bring to the southern neighbor. They will tell you that the only solution of the Mexican problem is the establishment of justice and tranquillity under the American flag. They will assure you very earnestly that they are tired of the recurrent turmoil across the line. They will point out that Texas has been prosperous and happy since its annexation in 1845, and they will insist firmly but gently that their State, despite its Mexican origin and

its remaining Mexican population, is just as American as Massachusetts. If you should make inquiries among the people of Utah, California, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico, the probability is that they would tell you that the annexation of Mexico, of which they were at one time a part, is as certain a development, sooner or later, as is the continued flow of the Rio Grande.

In this connection the fact that Mexico is already more American than Mexican, in point of ownership, has a good deal of vital significance.

That the United States has for many years been conducting an "economic intervention" in Mexico—in developing the country's natural resources and business possibilities—is well known, but is shown with particular clearness in the recent report of Marion Letcher, American consul at Chihuahua.

Americans have \$1,057,770,000 invested in all kinds of property in Mexico, while the investment of Mexicans themselves of like sort in Mexico is only \$793,187,242.

As if this were not a sufficiently incongruous financial situation, it further appears, on analysis, that \$362,983,042 of this total capital which Mexicans have invested in their own country is in houses, personal property, bank deposits, and pub-

lic and semipublic institutions. So far as the capital which Americans and Mexicans have placed in developing the natural resources and industrial possibilities of Mexico, Americans have \$1,029,370,000 so invested, while Mexicans have only \$430,204,200.

Americans, for example, have \$644,390,000 in Mexican railroad securities, while Mexicans themselves have only \$137,715,000. In mines and smelters Americans have \$249,500,000, against the mere \$14,700,000 of Mexicans themselves. Even in Mexico's national bonds Americans have invested \$52,000,000, against \$21,000,000 of Mexicans.

America has invested in factories \$9,600,000; Mexico, \$3,270,200. America has invested in the oil industry \$15,000,000; Mexico, \$650,000. America has invested in the rubber industry \$15,000,000; Mexico, \$4,500,000.

In ranches, farms, and live stock, on the other hand, Mexicans have \$108,000,000 to the \$13,110,000 of Americans. In retail stores in Mexico Mexicans also have \$71,235,000 to \$1,680,000 by Americans.

This shows clearly that Americans are already conducting the more general and larger business of Mexico and that the development of Mexico's natural resources is chiefly by American capital.

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TRANSITION

THE sea is gray to-day, and gray the sky.
 Upon the dim horizon's farthest verge
 A gray mist hangs—while slow, with sobbing urge,
 The undercurrent moans unceasingly
 Of old, gray memories that will not die.
 The whole wide ocean chants a questioning dirge,
 That only yesterday with eager surge
 Of valiant joy, shouted a trumpet-cry!
 With rattling musketry and booming roar
 And white manes tossing, rushed the chargers bold,
 Thundering in dauntless courage up the shore.
 In vain! Yet on that far rim, gray and cold,
 To-morrow beckons gloriously once more
 Along a sudden, widening path of gold!

Winifred Ballard Blake

WHAT SCIENCE SAYS ABOUT ALCOHOL

BY BURTON J. HENDRICK

IN the last few months there has been a revival of interest in a periodically recurring question—the physiological effects of alcohol. At a recent meeting of scientists in Milan, Professor Marchiafava, physician to the Pope, submitted the results of his researches on this subject, all of which showed the degenerating effects of persistent drinking. From the other side, also, comes the news that four kings of Europe—Alfonso, of Spain, Victor Emanuel, of Italy, Ferdinand, of Belgium, and Gustav, of Sweden—have joined the ranks of teetotalers.

Any one who investigates the present attitude of medical men toward the alcohol problem will find marked differences of opinion. If one confines his inquiries to practising physicians, he will discover plenty of authority that is not especially hostile to it.

Several years ago the famous Committee of Fifty questioned a large number of eminent physicians in this country and Europe. Several at once confessed that they used alcohol in moderate amounts and frequently prescribed it for their patients. I could easily fill several pages of this magazine with statements of eminent practising physicians to the same effect. On the other hand, I could quote an even larger number emphatically on the other side. I might, for example, refer to the statement of Sir Frederick Treves, the physician of Edward VII, that "alcohol is distinctly a poison, and the limitation of its use should be as strict as that of any other kind of poison. It is not an appetizer, and even in small quantities it hinders digestion."

It is hardly worth while, however, to rehearse in much detail opinions of this kind. Doctors base their conclusions upon experience, observation in their daily prac-

tise, and at the bedside, all colored more or less by personal inclinations, customs, and prejudice. On the other hand, there is a group of silent laboratory workers, who consider nothing but carefully observed and digested facts.

The doctors went on for years dosing sick people with all kinds of nostrums and drugs; the scientists were the men who discovered bacteriology, antitoxins, asepsis, vaccines, and the other great resources of modern medicine. The laboratory workers care nothing for theories and "inherited knowledge"; they submit everything to experimentation, to the test-tubes, and the microscope. The real founder of modern medicine, Louis Pasteur, was not a medical man at all—and, of course, never had professional relations with a sick man; he was simply a chemist.

"We are pygmies of human helplessness," says Dr. Richard C. Cabot, of Boston, himself an eminent practising physician, "compared with those giants who look beyond and behind the sick patient in the foreground to the tiny glimpse of truth in the far distance, and work toward that distant gleam by faith."

Now the remarkable fact is that, though the doctors may disagree about alcohol as about many other things, the scientists apparently never do. Practically all who have really experimented have rendered the verdict strongly against it. Alcohol, in their view, is not a stimulant, it is not an "appetizer" or an aid to digestion, it is not a food in any real meaning of the word, it is not an inspiration and help to mental work, and it does not increase muscular activity.

In other words, cold-blooded modern science brands as untrue practically all the claims for alcohol which poets, philosophers, convivialists, and even physicians

have made since the beginning of civilization. That peculiar combination of otherwise wholesome matter—two atoms of carbon, six atoms of hydrogen, and one atom of oxygen—which make up the alcohol molecule is a mistake, a chemical abortion, something which the human frame, in all its conditions of health and disease, is infinitely better off without.

One of the most famous of these experiments was that made several years ago by Clinton F. Hodge, professor of biology in Clark University. Professor Hodge did not use human beings—cats and dogs served his purpose quite as well.

His kittens, before the experiment began, were entirely normal; they had all the playfulness, all the interest in mice, and all the fear of dogs that commonly go with kittenhood. Professor Hodge learned one thing at the beginning—kittens have no inclination toward inebriety, natural or acquired. He attempted to mix moderate quantities of alcohol with their daily dietary—milk; as they would have none of it, however, the professor ultimately had to resort to a stomach-pump.

The effects were immediate. In ten days the experimenter had a couple of the most demoralized animals in the world; the most industrious human toper, in his last despairing period, seldom presents so deplorable a sight. The sleek and well-nurtured creatures had degenerated into frowzy, bleary-eyed monstrosities. Not only had they become exceedingly careless about their personal appearance, but they had practically lost the higher psychological faculties. One could roll a ball in front of them or pull a piece of paper on a string without arousing any inclination to play. They would blink unintelligently at a scampering mouse. A dog could poke his nose into their faces without inspiring even a minute elevation of the feline backbone.

The kittens no longer knew how to purr, and entirely neglected the act of rubbing against their friends. They could not have been less inactive, says the professor, had their cerebral hemispheres been removed with the knife.

After ten days these involuntary inebriates collapsed so completely that the alcohol ration was discontinued, in order to give them a chance to return to normality—to “sober up.” But they never again recovered their health; youth, for

them, was a lost illusion. The wild oats which the scientist had compelled these kittens to sow spelled death. One—the male—died four months after the experiment began; the other partially recovered her health, but was killed by a dog.

Professor Hodge's experiment with several dogs throws some light upon the disputed question of heredity. These were four cocker spaniels of excellent stock. They were all born on the same day; two, known as Topsy and Topsy, were sisters, and the others, Bum and Nig, were brothers. The more vigorous pair, Topsy and Bum, were selected as suitable subjects for alcoholization; the others were put aside as “controls”—animals, that is, kept in normal condition for the sake of permitting comparisons.

Like the kittens, the dogs always refused alcohol; by using energetic measures, however, they were soon transformed into abandoned inebriates. Indeed, they were given large doses—much larger in proportion to their size, than any human beings, except the most capacious drinkers, ever take in. In a few weeks they became thoroughly “pickled.” And then an epidemic of distemper assailed the kennel.

Topsy and Bum, the alcoholics, had the disease in severe form; the other normal animals had it slightly or escaped altogether. Alcohol, that is, considerably reduced their resisting power.

Before this happened, however, the dogs were frequently exercised in the university gymnasium to test their muscular efficiency. Balls were thrown a distance of one hundred feet and the animals invited to retrieve them. In all these exercises the non-alcoholic dogs demonstrated twice the efficiency of their less fortunate associates. Though strong drink apparently had no effect in diminishing canine intelligence, it did serve to make the animals exceedingly timid. The slightest disturbance threw them into paroxysms of fear; the blowing of a whistle, the ringing of a bell, would make them howl and yelp. Bum, whose alcoholic condition justified its name, began “to see things”—to have drunken hallucinations; he would frequently start at imaginary objects and begin howling.

Topsy—and this was the most remarkable fact in the experiment—proved a dismal failure as a mother. Professor Hodge established two pairs in the same kennel,

all sprung from the same stock, all originally well born and completely sound animals. Topsy and Bum, both sadly the victims of drink, were placed aside as parents of one prospective family; and Topsy and Nig, teetotalers, were kept together in a separate establishment.

At her first litter Topsy had seven puppies. Four of these were apparently normal; two were born dead, two had harelips. Three deformed and two dead puppies resulted from her next whelping. The third litter contained two dead animals, six that died soon after birth, and three that were deformed. Another trial gave Topsy three "children," all perfectly formed—and all dead. This time poor Topsy herself died.

In her several attempts at motherhood, therefore, this canine drunkard produced twenty-six whelps, of which only four proved to be normal. That alcohol explained these domestic tragedies is made clear when we examine the history of the associated family. Non-alcoholic Topsy, in this same period, was safely brought to bed of forty-five puppies, of which forty-one turned out to be credits, physically and mentally, to their parents!

"Possibly the most important results," says Professor Hodge, in commenting on these facts, "relates to the vigor and normality of offspring. Considered in relation to the general subject, our experiments supply additional evidence to prove that alcohol in small amounts exerts an inhibiting or sedative influence upon certain physiological processes. The evidence also supports the general conclusion of hygienists that, in feats of strength and endurance, alcohol should be avoided. On the psychic side, kittens showed a sudden collapse, not only of intelligence, but even of fundamental instincts. With dogs no impairment of general intelligence was manifested, except that timidity developed as a characteristic psychosis. This has wide application to the human problem, fear being characteristic of acute alcoholic poisoning as of alcoholic insanities. Delirium tremens is the most terrible fear psychosis known."

Several years ago the advocates of alcohol found considerable comfort in the work of Professor William O. Atwater, of Wesleyan University. Professor Atwater was unquestionably a great scientist as well as a most ingenious gentleman. He enjoys a

particular fame as the inventor of a celebrated contrivance known as the "respiration colorimeter." This was a boxlike structure, in which Professor Atwater imprisoned the human subjects he had selected for experimentation.

The purpose of imprisoning a man in this manner was to study the effects upon his system of his ingested food. Professor Atwater, after several days' experimentation, could tell to a nicety just how much food his subject had devoured and what had become of it—how much the body had transformed into heat or energy, how much it had stored up in the tissues for future use—in other words, he could determine the "fuel value" of the several articles of diet.

The experiment that made Professor Atwater and his cabinet especially famous was the one undertaken to determine whether alcohol, in moderate quantities, was a "food." As a matter of fact, science had known for fifty years that, in a certain sense, it was a "food." What Professor Atwater demonstrated was that it had greater food value than had hitherto been suspected. If consumed in moderate quantities, the body actually utilizes about ninety-eight per cent. That is, the human system does not throw it off, as it does other substances not useful to the bodily organism, but actually absorbs it, makes it a part of itself, and transforms it into heat that may, under certain conditions, ultimately serve a physiological purpose as muscular power.

Although, as already said, scientific men manifested no surprise at the outcome of this experiment, it produced an enormous sensation in temperance circles. The fact that Professor Atwater's experiment had been performed at a Methodist university gave his discovery a touch of unconscious humor. The distinguished professor announced his results in language that seemed to imply a keen relish in the outcome—as though he had succeeded in "putting one over" on the W. C. T. U.

But, after all, the disclosure was not a startling one. When Professor Atwater declared that "alcohol was a food" he did not mean that it was a food in the sense that beefsteak, potatoes, rice, and Boston baked beans are food. When a scientist says that a certain article is a food, he means that it consists of one or all of the chemical molecules known as pro-

teins, carbohydrates, and fats. Everything that the system receives it ultimately transforms into one of these mysterious substances. The first is the chemical constituent that develops into muscle; while the carbohydrates and fats are the things which the body burns or oxidizes and changes into energy. Proteins make the inert body itself—the bones, tissues, finger-nails, internal organs, and brains; the carbohydrates and fats are the agencies that galvanize this helpless mass into action—that make it breathe, think, walk, and work. Anything transformable into any one of these substances, or into all of them at once, is physiologically a food.

Alcohol, as Professor Atwater and many of his predecessors had found, did change into heat. However, it contained no protein and so could not serve as a tissue-builder. It was therefore an incomplete food, or, as Professor Atwater himself described it, "a one-sided food." Again, says Professor Atwater, "it cannot be taken in large quantities by ordinary people without intoxication, and even if large quantities are tolerated, it cannot support life permanently; it lacks the nitrogenous and mineral material constituents which the body requires for tissue-building and numerous other purposes."

Another point, said the experimenter, was that "when it causes no symptoms of intoxication, its action as a drug may impair the efficiency of the most productive muscular and mental work."

And so Professor Atwater seems to have damned his own discovery with faint praise; other physiological chemists, equally distinguished, bombarded it from other standpoints. Unquestionably the greatest American in this line is Professor Chittenden, of the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University. Another is Dr. Reid Hunt, at present professor of pharmacology at the Harvard Medical School. Both these men have given years to studying the physiological effects of alcohol. Both, while freely admitting that alcohol is a food in the sense that the cells oxidize it, have found that, for other reasons, it is an exceedingly dangerous food.

The trouble, according to Professor Chittenden, is that alcohol, even in innocent amounts, seriously interferes with other body processes. The function of the liver, for example, is largely to destroy certain poisons taken in with our food,

notably uric acid. But alcohol so interferes with the liver that it cannot perform this duty acceptably.

"Alcohol," Professor Chittenden says, "presents a dangerous side wholly wanting in carbohydrates and fats. The latter are simply burned up to carbonic acid and water, or are transformed into glycogen or fat, but alcohol, though more easily burned, is at all times liable to obstruct, in some measure, at least, the oxidative processes of the liver and probably other processes, too, thereby throwing into circulation bodies such as uric acid, which are inimical to health; a fact that at once tends to draw a distinct line of demarcation between alcohol and the two non-nitrogenous foods."

Professor Reid Hunt, after prolonged experiments in mice, came to a similar conclusion.

Man, therefore, cannot live on alcohol alone; but has it not other uses? Is it not an "aid to digestion"? Since it is burned and transformed into heat, as we have seen, does it not increase muscular efficiency? Does it not transfer some of its sparkle to the mind? Cannot the writer write better, the poet pour forth more ecstatic strains, the orator feel inspired to more heroic flights? We have all been often told that Byron did his finest work under the inspiration of his "hock and soda water," and that Daniel Webster was never so effective as after having freely imbibed. In recent years cold-blooded scientists have submitted the eloquent claims of Omar to the unfeeling test of the laboratory. And Omar, splendid poet as he is, turns out to have written his immortal quatrains under the saddest kind of a misapprehension.

This same Professor Chittenden who assails Professor Atwater's "food" theory so scientifically, has pretty conclusively disposed of another fallacy of the tippler: that alcohol "aids digestion." The professor handles this alcoholic superstition quite gently, but none the less effectively.

If you take a preliminary cocktail, the digestive ferments will begin to pour into the stomach. So far so good. In a few minutes, however, the alcohol is absorbed, and then its destructive effects begin to manifest themselves. At first, as the toper fondly believes, it does "aid digestion" and is actually an "appetizer"; presently, however, it tends to "stop digestion."

The net result, therefore, so far as digestion is concerned, is just about the same as though you had taken no alcohol at all. On the other hand, there are certain alcoholic drinks, like sherry and most white and red wines, that positively retard stomachic digestion. Whatever else they show, these Chittenden experiments picture in rather a strange light the good old family doctor who prescribed various wines and whiskies with meals as auxiliaries to the assimilation of food.

But how about muscular work? Doesn't a frequent glass of beer or a little wine at meals, such as many people take habitually, stimulate muscular activity? Professor Atwater's dictum on the food value of alcohol has considerable importance in this connection. The heat it generates ought certainly to expend itself in the shape of muscular energy. The Germans, in their dreary, scientific way, have pretty thoroughly canvassed this question. Any one who wishes can find the answer in bewildering statistical form in several of the *Behandlungen* in which weighty and conclusive matters of this kind are usually entombed. Dr. Schynder's experiments, for example, are entitled to be regarded as "classical."

One of the most used muscles of the human frame is the index finger of the right hand. A celebrated Italian, Angelo Mosso, has invented an instrument known as the ergograph, which accurately tests the efficiency of this indispensable member. The mechanism is so arranged that the wrist and arm muscles are held tight, and the energy of the finger tested by the number of times it can lift, to the length of a meter, a single kilogram weight. The purpose of the experimenter was to test the extent to which moderate amounts of wine increased or decreased a man's capacity to perform this simple operation.

A long and elaborate series of experiments clearly demonstrated that moderate amounts of alcohol diminished the energy of this index finger. The experimenter pitted alcohol against tropon—a nutritious food, consisting of animal and vegetable proteins, which is given to the sick and the convalescent. That is, the subject would eat a meal of tropon and then test the energy and endurance of his index finger. He would then drink a ration of alcohol which had exactly the same "food value"—that is, the heat and energy—as the

tropon. Had there been any scientific truth in the idea that alcohol is really a physiological food, both tropon and alcohol ought clearly to have done the same amount of work. But the subject was able to lift this tiny weight many more times with the heat supplied by the tropon than with that supplied by the alcohol.

This simple demonstration, however, did not complete the experiment. Food, as commonly understood, clearly has greater energy-producing powers than alcohol, but there still remains the practical question: how about the value of alcohol when taken with other food? The experiment showed that alcohol does produce utilizable heat energy, though not in such quantities as "regular" food: does not the "usual glass of wine" taken regularly with meals, therefore, serve a real physiological purpose? Does it not make us stronger, more capable of work?

The examination of this point brought out a really amazing fact. This was that a meal made up of such materials as soup, meat, vegetables, and bread has greater fuel value than the same meal when moderate quantities of alcohol are taken with it. A man who had taken an unalcoholized meal could lift this weight a certain number of times in a given period: after eating the same meal, with a little wine added, he always fell far behind this record!

The conclusion is apparent: though alcohol, in Professor Atwater's sense, is a food, the body will not use it when it has other available nutriment at hand. And so, at the hands of the scientist, falls another cherished idea, the belief that "drinking with meals"—the universal European custom—is, if not physically beneficial, at least not demoralizing.

But there still remains another age-long tradition. There is mental life in the sparkling bowl; it stimulates thought, makes us mentally keen, alert, capable of our highest mental flights. Here again it is laboratory workers in the great beer-drinking country, Germany, that lay another alcoholic ghost. Here are a group of average men, capable of the usual high mental operations of humankind: how do their minds work, first without alcohol and, secondly, with it? The experimenters are the famous Professor Kraepelin and his pupil, Kürz; if you want the results in fine scientific German, you will

find them tucked away in the volumes of the *Psychologische Arbeiter*.

It is the simplest thing in the world to test a man's mental capacity. A favorite method is to find how many ordinary additions of single placed figures he can do in an allotted time. This is known theoretically as an "habitual association of ideas"—a mental process, that is, which we are constantly performing. The Herr Professor tested his subject with his faculties as nature gave them and discovered his normal capacity. He then tested the same man after he had been slightly alcoholized. Alcohol greatly reduced his ability at this simple operation. Moreover, the man's mathematics became worse day by day; the effect of daily moderate drinking was cumulative.

Another mental test had the same result. This involved a higher psychical faculty, that known as its "free association of ideas." For example, think of the name of any object—say a "house." Then immediately write down the other things that this word suggests—people, home, the family cat, an overdue mortgage, a wedding, a funeral, and so on. An active and trained mind reveals itself in the number and logic of the ideas presented; they flow out of it almost automatically. Try this one day in a perfectly sober state. Then try it ten or twelve hours after imbibing a small amount of champagne. Perform both these experiments many times, as Kraepelin's subjects did, so that the results cannot be explained by other causes; our minds, of course, are notoriously more active some days than others.

A record of your experiments, extending through a considerable time, will show that "idea-association" comes far more quickly to the normal than to the alcoholic brain. Alcohol affects these higher mental faculties even more than it does the lower. Other experiments likewise demonstrated that the same mind, without alcohol, is much better at remembering than when it contains a little alcohol. One does not have to get repeatedly drunk to impair his memorizing ability: a little strong drink, taken every day, will do the trick. And

the memory becomes weaker the longer the alcoholic process continues.

And so science disposes of most of the superstitions that have accumulated about alcohol in several thousands of years. And it has discovered many other things more recondite. It does not believe that alcohol is a heart stimulant; "it is a heart depressant," says Lafayette B. Mendell, professor of physiological chemistry in Yale University. It lowers one's resistance to contagious disease.

On this point I can quote the world's highest medical authority on contagion and immunity—Professor Elie Metchnikoff, of the Pasteur Institute. Most readers know Metchnikoff as the man who believes that humankind can reach the age of one hundred and forty years if it lives upon a diet of sour milk: his real claim to immortality, however, is as the discoverer of the phenomenon known as "phagocytosis." He is the man who first detected the qualities of that remarkable animal cell which he named the "phagocyte." Even the motion-picture screen now shows this physical wonder in operation.

The "phagocyte" is simply the white blood corpuscle; its duty, among other things, is to destroy the invading microbe of disease. Death-dealing organisms are gaining access to the blood all the time; the phagocytes, however, pounce upon and destroy them. That is why we don't fall sick, or, if we do become ill and recover, we do so because the phagocytes have succeeded in destroying the enemy. An active army of these defenders is clearly a desirable resource in every active, well-equipped body; if we do not possess it, we easily fall a prey to contagious disease. According to Metchnikoff, alcohol in the blood stream greatly weakens the phagocytic process.

"Besides its deleterious influence on the nervous system," he says, "and other important parts of the body, alcohol has a harmful action on the phagocytes, the agents of natural defense against infective microbes." Distinguished medical men in this country have reached the same conclusion.

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Light Verse

THE JOYS OF TRAVEL

A WESTRUCK, I stand within the spacious square—

On either hand a giant colonnade;
Before me, towering in the crystal air,
The loftiest dome that human hands have made.
St. Peter's! Goal of countless pilgrims' hopes,
The resting-place of princes, saints, and popes;
The greatest church of Christendom—to thee
Fain would I tribute pay on bended knee.
But ah, my dream is broken—all around
I hear a chorus of discordant sound:

"Photographs of Rome, sir? Very cheap indeed!
Roman pearls? Mosaic, sir? Anything you need!
Cab, sir? Taxi, sir? Want to take a ride?
I can speak ze English, sir—don't you want a guide?"

Beside the lovely bay my footsteps rest;
Lo, high above its teeming shore there lifts
The gray volcano, from whose riven crest
A ceaseless smoke-wreath, slow and sullen,
drifts.

The tideless waters gleam with sapphire hue,
The distant headlands fade to paler blue.
"See Naples once—and be content to die!"
So fair the picture framed by earth and sky,
I almost feel the ancient saying true;
But hark! Again the loud pursuing crew:

"Lava from Vesuvius, sir! Very cheap I sell!
Only thirty soldi for a comb of tortoise shell!
Picture-cards of Naples, sir? Pretty books of views?

Here's a coral necklace that I know you can't refuse!"

How from such persecution seek release?

In flight alone lies safety, and I flee!
Seeking a spot where I may walk in peace,
I journey homeward over land and sea.
Fair Italy, my thoughts are still with thee;
Full often, wheresoever I may be,
As in a dream, before my raptured eyes
Thy classic hills, thy storied cities rise;
But when the wondrous vision hovers near,
Hoarse voices seem to fall upon my ear:

"Cab, sir? Guide, sir? I'm the man who knows!
Post-cards, corals, photographs, mosaics, cameos?"

Souvenirs of Naples, sir? Souvenirs of Rome?
Here you are, sir—very cheap! Buy them, take them home!"

R. H. Titherington

KEEPING UP WITH POLLY

MOTHER and me, we pinched and saved
To send our girl to college.
She's home again: so well-behaved,
And burstin' full of knowledge.
"You mustn't say 'done' for 'did,' Ma-maw,
It's wrong!" she says to Mother.
Then next it's me: "Not 'seen,' but 'saw,'
Pa-paw; and don't use 't'other'!"

Mother and me, we don't know how
To act, it seems, or talk;
We're mighty meek and timid now,
And on our tiptoes walk
Around the house, for fear we'll make,
Through ignorance or folly,
Some kind of clumsy slip or break
To further shame our Polly.

Mother and me, we've sort of come,
Of late, to the conclusion,
Seen' as how we're both so dumb,
That it was a delusion
Goin' to all the trouble and fuss
And cost of graduatin'
Our girl through college when 'twas us
That needed educatin'!

Keene Thompson

A MODERN RONDEAU

THE tango teas delight Jeannette:
Each afternoon on festive toe
She dances gaily to and fro.
Her frock—*charmuse* or *marquise*
In tones of peach or violet,
Rejoices all the folk who go
To tango teas.

Her lattice-slipped feet are set
Upon my heart, she well must know,
Nor treads a whit more softly so.
But—who can blame her, or forget
The tango tease?

Ethel M. Coleman

THE SPINSTER QUESTION

(DISCUSSION No. 5)

THE ORIGINAL SPINSTER SPEAKS AGAIN

BY KATHARINE EGGLESTON

I, THE Spinster, am comrade with Aladdin now. The impossible has happened. In a moment of suffering that demanded expression, and in an attitude of almost helpless willingness to trust my fellow beings, I confided my innermost, intensest self to paper. The lad in the "Arabian Nights" must have felt the same trustfulness and the same truthfulness. That trust and truth formed the secret of the touch with which he rubbed the old bronze lamp. And lo! more wonderful than his untutored dreams could have pictured, marvelous answers came.

So they have come to me, deep glimpses into hearts as sore 'as my own, bright flashes of inspiration from those who are tenderly wise to help, great burning flames of anger with me because I am such a "spineless creature," small and timid acknowledgments that what I have written is true, but must not be so frankly voiced—all these revelations have come in the letters which have been the response to the Spinster's Plaint.

When I wrote that there was no tragedy like the tragedy of the woman who wants a home and has none I meant it. I meant it with every aching throb of my heart. I mean it now. As I write it the same hot tears come to my eyes that have clouded them hundreds of times when I stand behind the curtains of my parlor windows and watch husbands and children hurrying—home. That is about the loneliest time. You who write me that I should "keep busy," can you tell me of something to do, then, that will fill my mind and warm

my heart, the heart of a woman who longs for the simple, normal joys of life and has them not?

Did all these letters bring no answer, no solution for my individual problem? They did—a confusing array of answers. Shot from the arid region into which busy humanity unconsciously exiles the undesired woman, I am—frankly, I'm more confused now than I was miserable before. But, being confused is vastly more agreeable than being miserable. It is exciting; but I haven't the remotest notion what to do. I can appreciate the dilemma of the man with the white elephant on his hands.

I can sympathize with the Old-Woman-Who-Lived-in-the-Shoe, only the things of which I have so many that I don't know what to do are proposals.

I realize now—much better than I did when I wrote—how I really flung myself upon the mercy of those who might read that first article of mine. I confess that seeing it in print rather terrified me; I was so completely frank. I should hardly have dared it had I known how much of myself I was exposing to the criticism of others. But now, having risked the ordeal, I mean to continue the same frankness because it brought me such an amazing reward in sympathy and advice and honest, earnest criticism. Because I so genuinely appreciate it all, because I believe that the messages were written me with the same sincerity which marked my plaint, I am laying before you these letters of proposal.

This one seems promising to me. It is written in a big, vigorous hand; and the man signs a name that an honored President of our own country once bore distinguishedly.

MY DEAR SPINSTER:

Your *Plaint* revealed such depths of womanly sweetness that I am fired with courage to try to know the lady who possesses such attractive qualities. I am a bachelor; and in actual contact with ladies I am painfully shy. Perhaps that is why I can undertake a wooing by letter more easily. It's a fact that I have never known a woman really well because I find such difficulty in talking with them. My profession—I am an analytical chemist—has associated me with men almost exclusively.

I have attained some measure of success along a line of original research and have a comfortable income from my work. If you live in the neighborhood of New York City, I can make it convenient to come to see you whenever you will be so kind as to grant me the privilege. I cannot resist saying that I hope you may let me come soon. I feel an entirely new bravery in seeking you, possibly because I am better acquainted with you from reading this remarkable and winsome "*Plaint*" than I could have become if forced to undertake the difficulties of conversation. If I did not feel that a woman of the delicacy which your writing shows might take fright at such headlong methods, I should ask you to let me propose to you in this first letter. But I will wait till you have indicated that you are willing to let me write you again—often, or have told me that I may come to see you.

Perhaps I should tell you that I am fifty-one years old, with no vices except the devotion to my work and the bashfulness I have mentioned. I hope you will regard my request favorably and will write me.

Very respectfully, *et cetera*,

If you saw the swirling vigor of this writing, it would be hard to think of the author as a bashful man. But why should that matter? I am shy, too, when I am not talking on paper. Yet I know I feel deeply and yearn intensely for life's tenderness and its higher responsibilities. I should be the last one in the world to be alarmed by shyness—and I am not.

It's a very delightful thing to any woman to think that she can be of service. Perhaps I might make a life that has been rather dull and somewhat lacking in the touches a woman can give altogether bright and interesting. It's nice to think of it. It's much better than—well, adopting a baby, for instance, which seems to

be the one remedy a number of women have to offer me.

I do not want to adopt a baby. From the heights of the excitement these letters have induced, I fling defiance to those who offer me stones when I ask for bread. I want my baby on my breast, with my own heart singing the lullaby that nature set vibrating there, to ring softly beneath every other sound of life.

Another thing my new-found bravery incites me to say—perhaps I am too ambitious to be a mother; but I am utterly unable to see why it is perfectly good form and worthy to be admired of all women, to rant and rave about the desire to be an author or an actress or anything the mind of woman can conceive and the heart set up to want and worship *except* the one thing that nature and nature's God seem to have planned she should be. I should love to be able to feel that I could do the best for myself and the world in which I want to serve if I undertook a public career or writing or church work or suffrage; but I do not and cannot feel that way.

However, I am not saying that mine are the feelings which should animate *all* women. I am not decrying or underestimating or belittling the work and the self-expression which women are finding in these varied activities. No, indeed. I admire them. I almost envy the joy they enjoy in having found themselves busy in what they most wish to do; but I do feel that women who feel as I do, who earnestly and deeply desire another form of service and believe they could find happiness in another kind of a career, ought to have the same consideration that one of them, at least, is willing to extend those who differ from her.

Here is a proposal which has in it a fresh tang, as if it had swallowed a draft of the wind of the West, whence it came:

DEAR MISS:

Just read your story in *THE MUNSEY*. It sounds mighty good to me. I've been ranching alone out here for about four years; was sent out to die. But I'm not dead—not by a good deal. I'm more alive than I ever was when I was harnessed to a broker's office in New York. But I'm lonely. The climate's great; but climate is not all a man wants.

I'm forty-seven, have three thousand dollars in the bank, and seven hundred acres of good land. I would build a new house. I can come

East if I must; but I can't get away before May. If you have not decided on some other fellow by that time, suppose you drop me a line. I enclose names of the banker in the nearest town, three neighbors, and the doctor. Any of them will tell you about me if you want to ask. I should like your picture, if it is not asking too much. But it's what you say that gets me. I am not so crazy to get married that I should care for a wife who was not kind and womanly and pretty well educated. I can see that you are, so kindly slip me the word if I have any show.

Yours truly, *et cetera*,

Am I wrong—some of you who know men better than I should be able to tell me—in thinking there is a great deal of strength and satisfactory directness about this man?

Those of you who read between the lines must know how odd it seems to a woman who never had any proposals before to have so many now. And one thing about all of them is pleasant. The men seem to understand that I never for an instant lost sight of the thought that the father of the child I longed to have must be my comrade and lover, too.

Some of the women who write me have not understood. I suppose I should have written it out in words; but it was so permanently in my thoughts that I imagined every one knew it as well as I. In all these letters, the fact that congeniality of thought and sympathy is their mainspring is perfectly evident.

The following letter is a whole life-history in a few words. I like the man it presents to my mind's eye. And I am sorry for him.

MY DEAR SPINSTER:

I read your "Plaint" with much interest and, I believe, understanding. I appear before you as a special pleader to suggest a combination. "A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind," dear lady, and I have the feeling you portray as your own; we are both of the disinherited—you of your natural and inherent rights rather than in property, I in both.

On the threshold of my fiftieth year, I stand a confessed failure so far as worldly success goes. Yet I am neither vicious nor given to any destructive habits. I simply have not the faculty for securing the smiles of Mammon. It has been my dream to know a woman—a lady—who would inspire my somewhat easy-going nature to direct its efforts and restrain my disposition to "take chances." I am not looking for an opportunity to become a parasite. I have developed the ability to do many things fairly well which is the tragic accompaniment of the in-

ability to do any one of them in a way to command success.

You have some means and a home. Would you see beneath the estimate that it is the world's habit to place upon money and find enough that was worth while in my education, refinement, and earnest desire for home and the close and beautiful association with a sweet woman to make you overlook what I have not and extend me the opportunity to prove myself if I am able?

Most sincerely and respectfully, *et cetera*,

It's a lonely, rather sad letter. I presume I have a good deal of sympathy for the person whom the world takes at an estimate which seems to him not quite right. I have felt that way myself. Reasonably well-fitted for what I wish to be, sufficiently loving and appreciative to value the blessing if it came, I have known that others did not see me in the same way—those others through whom I might have reached my heart's desire. So I know what he means by "the fellow-feeling."

But is it a good basis for the combination he suggests? Some one who has tried being married surely can tell me what makes a reliable foundation for the building of a home, for the partnership between a man and a woman.

Each letter has its problem. I have thought about them till, like *Hamlet*, the native hue of my resolution is sicklied over with the pale cast of thought and this enterprise of pith and moment, this longing for home and all it means, seems not to reach a culminating point. Deciding from a letter on which man to welcome as a possible husband is quite as serious business to me as killing his uncle was to the melancholy Dane, only I want to get at it instead of sitting here trying to decide where to begin.

DEAR MISS:

You may be a married woman, or one of those indiscriminating creatures, a man, who goes through life successfully without anybody knowing just why. However, that composition of yours was so replete with many truths that probably some man reading it will think, "There is a woman who will make my life comfortable and happy because of her sympathy and intelligence."

Indeed, I am not sure that I would not be the first to send on a proposal were it not that I have an understanding with my two children that, if I make a second venture, the lady must first be approved by them. I hope, though, that you will send me word of that proposal from some other man. My good wishes in your choice.

Sincerely yours, *et cetera*,

I almost wish he had really and out-and-outly proposed; the letter reveals a consideration for his children which must be a trait accompanied by others as agreeable. If I met this man, and if my sympathy and intelligence were as great as he believes, it might be the bed-rock of an interest possessing a superstructure of fervor and affection that would nerve me to the scrutiny of those young mother-remembering eyes before which I must pass muster. I should be sensitive to that look. Precious as it would be to *be* a mother, it must be very precious to the heart of a child to have *had* a mother. I would seem a candidate for her honors to them.

Another letter, written in the even, beautiful hand which Germans use, and which contrasts pleasantly with our careless American writing, is almost quaint in its stately formality.

DEAR LADY:

In regard to your article, "The Plaint of the Spinster," in *THE MUNSEY*, I have perused it with much intense interest. It has made a deep impression upon me; and I wish to express my heartfelt sympathy. To be candid, you have touched my heart; and I would like it very much to become nearer acquainted with you. Would it be asking too much if I await a favorable reply?

Yours most respectfully, *et cetera*,

Of course, this letter is not very descriptive. But I believe the heart I have touched is worth touching. I am grateful for his appreciation; but I—I wish he had said more about himself. However, this next letter is not to be criticised on that score.

DEAR MISS:

I read your article in *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE*. It agrees with my ideas exactly. I am lonely, too, and would fairly worship a good, loving wife. Age sixty, height five feet nine inches, weight one hundred and fifty-five pounds, hair gray, heavy mustache, light reddish brown, don't smoke, and detest whisky, drink glass of beer in the summer sometimes, one the limit, never sick, can walk ten miles a day and keep it up all week if I had to.

I enclose names of the Governor of our State, the editor of one of our papers, and a banker. To them you can refer as to my respectability. I know well that this last will cause you to turn me down, but then "faint heart never won fair lady." I have eight living and one dead children; none of them live with me. I bach it alone, so, dear miss, if you hand me a lemon there will

be no harm done, as I shall never know your name and address.

Respectfully yours, *et cetera*,

What could I have written that led him to suppose respectability would be a disadvantage? I have never known any but respectable people, so I should scarcely be afraid of a respectable husband. The children, eight living and one dead, are much more alarming. Just the same, I suspect this man of a fine large sense of humor; and, even though sixty years is a little too far along life's pathway to make me feel that we should walk together harmoniously, I think this man is very nice. I should much rather hand him something sweet and pleasant than anything sour or disagreeable.

That old club which the cave-man brandished when he wooed the woman of his choice is in this next letter, even though it ends with a more modern and polite kind of weapon.

DEAR MADAM:

I have just been reading your article in the January *MUNSEY*. I think, from the tone of it, that you are a fraud. It sounds to me like the author was an old married woman with fourteen children. But, if I am mistaken, and you really are what you say and would be interested in a man, I would like to have your address and your picture. I hope you can favor me with both; and, I assure you, you will never regret it. Hoping to hear from you, I remain,

Yours respectfully, *et cetera*,

Mercy! what kind of a husband would he make? Possibly his bark is worse than his bite; but it certainly is a terrifying one. Would I have the courage to investigate beyond the bark, to risk the bite? I don't like being called a fraud. It's sufficiently bad to be a really truly old maid without having it thrust into my throat that I am just pretending to be one. I can't think of anything I would not pretend before that if I were in the pretending business.

The following letter is so direct and explicit that I do not print it because I want advice about it. I just show it as an example of how clearly a man can say what he means when he knows what he is talking about.

DEAR MISS:

If you are not too old for a family, and you are not yet engaged, I should be glad to consider the matter with you. Descent, English—traveler—don't use tobacco or alcohol—some means.

Waiting for word from you, I am, *et cetera*,

Only one letter in all of the many that have reached me was really hard and unfeeling. But I ought to explain that it was written to the editor of the magazine, not directly to me. Perhaps the writer suspected that the Spinster was the editor; but he never was farther from the truth. I am the Spinster; and his letter was forwarded, like the others, to me here in my own home.

To the Editor of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE,
New York City.

DEAR SIR:

I have read "The Plaint of the Spinster" in THE MUNSEY. If you will pardon me, I would suggest that you write this jaundice-livered old maid and tell her that matrimony is not all it is cracked up to be. Tell her to think of the marriages—one divorce to every five usually—and of the couples that scrap and wrangle but hesitate to ask for a divorce because of the notoriety. If this old maid—this unappropriated blessing—wants a child, the asylums are full of them. If her sister took her "beau" so easily, what would there have been to hold him even if she had been married to him?

Why don't she get busy? Be a settlement worker. If she would do something she might get a beau and a husband even yet. If she has always been folding her hands and looking wall-eyed at the hand of fate, no wonder she has no beau and husband.

Yours for information,

Of course, I was angered for a moment. But if this man really thinks that a woman who stays in a home which is hers, keeps it, makes most of her own clothes and the clothes of her washerwoman's family of five, does what church work she is allowed to do by women of more assertive natures, responds to the need for a nurse whenever asked—in short, lives the circumscribed but certainly not indolent life that is open to her, deserves the attack he makes, then the blame is due to his lack of information rather than his intention.

But I tell him and any of the rest of you who may have thought my plaint too doleful, that I am *not* satisfied with the activities that fill my time. Summer before last I entertained three run-down teachers for two weeks each. They were all busy; but they, too, felt that what they did was not what they yearned to do, and consequently it counted for almost nothing in their own minds and hearts. It is perfectly possible to keep one's hands and head busy, yet, when the measuring time

comes, feel that it is all rather futile and very unsatisfactory.

Neither did I find balm in caring for the children I have taken when the city-workers send the little slum folks to us for a change. Kindness and charity are not all my heart wishes as exercise. I cared for those children, really enjoyed them at times; but not one of them slid into my heart as did my little niece. Perhaps I am narrow in wanting a child of my very own.

This next letter is about the most intense and unique of all. I have read it again and again, at night when every one in my neighborhood is at home, the fathers and the children with the mothers, while I sit alone in my empty house.

DEAR MISS SPINSTER:

I call you that because it is the name under which you paid the readers of the January MUNSEY a very welcome and most extraordinary visit. Miss Spinster it shall be till I know another name—if I ever do.

Do you know that your very remarkable plaint struck a few million bachelors right in the middle of their emotional solar plexi? No? Thought so. That's why I am "butting in" to tell you so.

Imagine a person chained down in a hot, burning desert, almost perished from hunger and thirst when, just as hope goes, he sees a wonderful oasis, food, pearly streams of water, grassy knolls, and shady dells—but all beyond his reach! Conjure a picture of the wretch straining, striving, pleading, cursing. Well, that's about the mental condition into which your story has thrown any number of the great army of male spinsters, these poor, pitiful, shriveled-up little hearts, shivering and dying in the barren region of a loveless life, men who do not feel the soft, warm pressure of a woman's lips, who never have a woman look into their eyes and say—"I love you; I trust you; I believe in you."

I myself must just sigh at the end of your plaint—"Me, too!" There was a girl, when I was about twenty. The mere shadow of a memory she is now. And after years of loneliness and vain regret, you come along and tell me it is all unnecessary, that I have committed the unpardonable sin of letting some woman go down to her grave starving for a husband's love.

Yes, I could have married. There was the "new" woman who had the art of managing men reduced to a *fin-de-siècle* how-do-you-do. Shades of Benedick! I did not want to be managed. I wanted to be loved. I wanted to have one hand in the managing business myself—not both hands, mind you.

Then I encountered a soldieress of fortune willing to cross swords with me for the spoils of matrimony. Later there was a sensualist who spotted me for an affinity. Then there was a

sloven with a delightful disposition; she did not care especially, so that nothing was any bother.

But for a real woman crying out from the depths of her lonely heart for a real man, I have looked vainly. Show me, please! Just one! Never mind the other 9,999,999. If you know just one, pass this on to her. Tell her I want to hear from her. Tell her I have something I want to tell her.

If you are yourself a real, honest-injun, cross-my-heart spinster and this story is actually your own, you are the dearest and sweetest one that ever was, and I love you for what you have longed for and missed. I would like to see you and tell you so to your face. Would you stand for it? If you *are* a real spinster, don't pass this on. How do I know but that you are SHE? There has always been a SHE in my dreams. Of course, I am not hoping, not asking anything definite—at present—but write and tell me about yourself, won't you, please?

Yours in loneliness,

This is the nearest to a love-letter, isn't it? It's more of a love-letter than I ever had before. It fascinates me. Then I make fun of myself for a silly, romantic spinster who should be less sentimental and more sensible. Then—I read it again!

There are so many, many more, but I cannot show them all. There are letters from women, too, some of them like dark, half-terrifying glimpses into black wells of human misery and drowning ideals. But because they express with such frankness—the frankness which has become the key-note of this Spinster correspondence—the aches and breaks, the joys and hopes of human hearts, I cannot show them lightly or in limited space. I hope to give you some of them in another paper. In them lies the mystery and the mercy of human life.

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ON FOOT

SIR GOLD goes by in his motor-car,
I tramp the road and take his dust;
But a friendly wind from the hills afar
Sweeps it away with a laughing gust.
Sir Gold may ride, if he wills it so,
But let me follow the winding way
That leads to the hills and the streams I know,
Where the birches bend and the fishes play.

He has not seen in the sheltered nook
The windflower swing on the threadlike stalk.
He never knows how the fern fronds look,
Nor listens to jack-in-the-pulpit's talk.
And where the oriole's nest is swung,
A web of dreams against the sky—
Precious and sweet with her eager young—
Blind and stupid he rushes by.

Well, let him go if he likes the pace,
So long as he leaves the road behind!
In spite of his speed he has lost the race,
The tingling zest the foot-wise find.
Ho! Ho! I laugh at his sorry flight,
A speeding slave, when he might be free
In God's green weather of sweet delight,
On the good brown road, atramp with me.

George Edward Day

The Stage

Survival of the Revival

by Burns Mantle



THE producing manager of the theater is not poetical. To the contrary, he is inclined to be boastfully practical. Mr. Wordsworth's yellow primrose growing by the river's brim might appeal to him as a bright bit of color in the scenic scheme, but it would not enrapture his soul. Neither, for him, does spring "unlock the flowers to paint the laughing soil." He may be interested in spring as a season of revival, but it is his own revival, not Mother Nature's, that appeals with the most insistence.

For this he offers definite excuse: Either he has a theater on his hands for which a good and yet an inexpensive attraction must be quickly provided, or he is burdened with a group of high-salaried players whom he has contracted to keep in employment for a certain number of weeks each year. If his season's ventures have been successful the players under contract to him are profitably employed; but if not they are idly sitting about drawing their salaries and waiting for him to find something else for them to do.

The revival, too, is usually a safe venture, for two reasons: First, its values as entertainment have been proved; it has been most generously advertised, and it creates immediately a curiosity to see it on the part of those who follow the theater. Second, it is either so old a play that

there are no author's royalties to pay on it, or because of its age the royalties are very light. Modern or classic, there is usually an outfitting in somebody's storehouse that can be used for it, and thus the cost of staging it is comparatively small.

The revival, too, is very frequently a financial and artistic life-saver—not only in the spring-time, when it flourishes on every hand, but during the theatrical year, with managers constantly on the anxious seat as to what fare with which to tempt the fickle appetite of the public.

When Mr. Belasco last fall failed to find a new play suited to the peculiar talents of Mr. David Warfield, he revived "The Auctioneer," and thus closed a season that threatened disaster for him with a fair margin of profit.

When Mr. Charles Frohman saw the old friends of Mr. John Drew drawing reluctantly, but none the less surely, away from that actor's performance in "Much Ado About Nothing," he revived C. Haddon Chambers's "The Tyranny of Tears," added a short play by Sir James Barrie, and turned certain defeat into some sort of success. When Mr. Joseph Brooks realized that W. H. Crane could not play a second profitable season with "The Senator Keeps House," he revived "The (New) Henrietta," deftly adding an interest thereto by having the old play rewritten in modern form and provided with



GAIL KANE IS THE FORTUNATE YOUNG WOMAN SELECTED BY MR. GEORGE COHAN TO PLAY HELENA VAIL IN "THE MIRACLE MAN," WHICH HE IS DRAMATIZING FROM FRANK L. PACKARD'S NOVEL, PRINTED IN THE FEBRUARY MUNSEY

From her latest photograph by White, New York

an acting cast of some prominence, including the ebullient Douglas Fairbanks who played Stuart Robson's old part of *Bertie*.

When Miss Maude Adams's season in Barrie's "The Legend of Leonora" began

cold shoulder toward her Shakespearian repertoire Miss Margaret Anglin not only successfully revived Oscar Wilde's twenty-three-year-old play of manners and morals, the once sensational "Lady Windermere's



JANE GREY STARTED THE SEASON WITH BRUCE MCRAE IN EDGAR SELWYN'S FARCE "NEARLY MARRIED," AND FINISHED IT AS THE HEROINE OF "CORDELIA BLOSSOM,"
A NEW AMERICAN COMEDY BY GEORGE RANDOLPH CHESTER

From her latest photograph—copyright by Moffett, Chicago

to slump toward the ides of April, Mr. Frohman revived "Peter Pan" for a series of spring-time matinées, thus keeping his star employed for twelve performances each week and adding materially to the box-office receipts.

When Broadway turned its celebrated

Fan," but scored with it the biggest success she has had in five years.

Mr. Winthrop Ames, following a season devoted to "Prunella" and Mr. Bernard Shaw's "The Philanderer," which was none too successful at the Little Theater, revived the late Clyde Fitch's "The Truth"



REINE DAVIES IS TO HAVE THE PRINCIPAL FEMININE RÔLE IN "FORWARD MARCH," A NEW MUSICAL COMEDY WHICH WILL REINTRODUCE WILLIAM COLLIER AS STAR IN THIS FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT NEXT SEASON

From a photograph by Edmonston, Washington, D. C.



MARGARET OBER CONTINUES TO JUSTIFY THE POPULARITY SHE WON LAST YEAR AT THE METROPOLITAN, WHEN SHE MADE A SENSATIONAL DÉBUT AS ORTRUD, IN "LOHENGRIN."

From a photograph—copyright by Mishkin, New York

Easter week, and even so massive a production as that of the Hippodrome's spectacle, "America," was replaced by a revival of "Pinafore," with the hope of bringing the season to a close without the loss of profits threatened in February and March.

Even musical plays—of which there would always seem to be an oversupply—did not escape. When Mr. Arthur Hammerstein found himself without a musical comedy upon which to expend his managerial genius, he bought a musicalized version of Leo Ditrichstein's farce "Before and After," called it "High Jinks," and weathered a season that started unpropitiously, and when there was no play for Miss Blanche Ring, her advisers settled upon "Vivian's Papas," had it rewritten as "When Claudia Smiles," garnished it with a quartet of new songs, and went more or less merrily on their way.

After the tongue-twisting Sam Bernard had frittered away most of his season looking for what is known as a fitting vehicle, he induced the Messrs. Shubert to revive his 1904 success, "The Girl from Kay's," rename it "The Belle of Bond Street," and engaged the active Gaby Deslys for Miss Hattie Williams's old part as an added attraction.

The end is not yet. Two more revivals are coming from the Frohman offices. This spring John Drew and Ethel Barrymore will inject new life into Victorien Sardou's "A Scrap of Paper," and next October Mr. Frohman will follow the English tip and revive "Diplomacy," with Marie Doro, William Gillette, and Blanche Bates in its three principal rôles. Miss Doro has been playing in the London revival, and Miss Bates has played in "Diplomacy" in stock. It will mark Mr. Gillette's return to the stage after a considerable rest.

In London a similar condition obtains. The revival of "Diplomacy" there at Wyndham's Theater, under Gerald Du Maurier's direction, ran from March 26, 1913, to April 18, 1914, when it was transferred to another house, while a second company successfully toured the provinces with this same old play. At His Majesty's,

Sir Herbert Tree was forced to revive "The Darling of the Gods," following the run of "Joseph and His Brethren," and

Miss Marie Tempest again fell back on "The Marriage of Kitty" at Cyril Maude's Playhouse in February, and "The



MARY NASH WAS THE FIRST OF THE SUFFERING HEROINES IN THE SERIES OF RED LIGHT DRAMAS. SHE PLAYED THE MISGUIDED YOUNG WOMAN IN "THE LURE," AND PASSED THENCE VIA VAUDEVILLE INTO "THE CALL OF YOUTH," THE NEW HATTON COMEDY

From her latest photograph by White, New York

this play continued from January until April.

At the Globe "Kismet," after having been taken off two years ago, was returned to the stage in March to fill out the season.

"Tyranny of Tears" was revived at the London Comedy for a six weeks' mid-season canter.

The survival of the revival as an important factor in the theatrical year, while it

is a tribute to the talented writers of other days, is not necessarily a slap at the playwrights of the present. So expansive has the field become, and so many theaters are

comes to hand in the way of entertainment. With the supply limited, and the demand (for successes) unlimited, it is natural that revivals should be more and



INEZ PLUMMER IS THE YOUNG WOMAN WHOSE NUMEROUS STAGE RELATIVES CAUSE ALL THE TROUBLE IN "TOO MANY COOKS." HER FATHER IS A THEATER MANAGER IN SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

From a photograph by James & Bushnell, Seattle

there now to fill, that it is quite impossible to keep the standard always where it should be.

There are hundreds of theaters to-day where there were dozens ten years ago. Each of them is obliged to keep its doors open if it is to be a paying business, and each is therefore compelled to take what

more frequently depended on to fill the void.

MISS ANGLIN AND "THE FAN"

Of those who have brightened the spring with flowers from the gardens of the past, Miss Anglin's experience has so far been the happiest. "Lady Windermere's Fan"



JULIAN ELTINGE IS A CURIOSITY IN THAT HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN MAKING FEMININE IMPERSONATION AN ART RATHER THAN A MERE EXHIBITION. THIS SEASON HE IS PLAYING AN AMATEUR DETECTIVE IN "THE CRINOLINE GIRL"

From his latest photograph by White, New York



RUTH SHEPLEY HAS BEEN ENGAGED TO PLAY THE HEROINE IN ONE OF THE NEW SPRING FARCES, "IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE," WRITTEN BY ROI COOPER MEGRUE AND WALTER HACKETT

From her latest photograph—copyright by Moffett, Chicago

proved so inestimably superior to any other play of its type done this year that it swung immediately into an unusual and unexpected popularity, starting at the Hudson Theater in New York and being transferred to the Liberty to continue its run. Its first-night audience could not have been more enthusiastic had it been approving a new musical comedy by Mr. George Cohan, and yet it was an au-

dience that had nothing in common with musical comedy gatherings.

It received the smartly spoken personages of the play, from the uncompromisingly pure *Lady Windermere* to that early sample of the regretfully impure but defiantly unconventional feminine, *Mrs. Erlynne*, as though they were not only very old but very dear friends who had been away from home so long their ex-

ceptional conversational graces had been forgotten. The fact that the dialogue is impossibly smart worried no one. But the regret that such dialogue is not being written to-day, save by the most infrequently acted of playwrights, irritated many.

"PINAFORE" ON A MASSIVE SCALE

The revival of "Pinafore" at the New York Hippodrome is, pictorially, the most inspiring thing in the way of stage productions that has been accomplished in our country. Imagine, if you can, sitting on the shore of a bay, looking across the deck of an old-fashioned English man-o'-warship lying broadside to you and close in shore. Your view is something over half the ship's length, from the raised quarter-deck to well past the mainmast for'ard. She is full rigged, her two solid wooden masts towering a clear height of seventy feet above her decks to their fighting tops, and the real water of the huge Hippodrome tank laves her sides.

When the opera opens *Little Buttercup* and the other bumboat women of Portsmouth come floating in around the stern in their flat-bottomed skiffs, crying their wares to the sailors lining the starboard rail. *Buttercup* sings her entrance song sitting in her boat.

When that able seaman, *Ralph Rackstraw*, recites melodiously of the maiden fair to see he is perched high up in the rigging, and when *Sir Joseph* comes aboard they not only fire a broadside in his honor and dress the ship with the crew scampering up the shrouds, but on the deck below a company of marines stands at attention and the ship's band blares out a welcome.

Sir Joseph has never before had so numerous or so beautiful or so stylish a family. His sisters, his cousins, and his aunts, in all their spring finery, make a brave display in themselves and sing as no other "Pinafore" chorus within our memory has ever sung.

There is one actress who, though her early season was not a complete success, did not depend upon a revival to save it. That one was Billie Burke, who tried her best to be accepted as a serious actress in "The Land of Promise" and found that her public preferred her as she used to be in the days of her comedy reign.

You may recall that Miss Billie had a rather unpleasant part in "The Land of

Promise." There was not much chance for the dainty, fluffy, fascinating Billie to shine in that play. She wore black, and kept house in a shack, and all that sort of thing. And she was very unhappy. New York accepted the change as salutary. But Boston frowned and turned its back on "The Land of Promise." Whereupon Manager Frohman brought his star home and gave her a new comedy to play with.

BILLIE AND HER PINK PAJAMAS

The new play is called "Jerry," was written practically to order by Catherine Chisholm Cushing, and offers good chance for the spirited Billie to repeat all the cute little tricks her admirers dote on.

Being a Titian-haired tomboy from Chicago, visiting in Philadelphia, she elects to steal the sweetheart of a maiden aunt—first, because she likes him; second, because she is convinced he does not love the aunt. A reasonable conclusion, seeing that the aunt and he had been engaged for twenty years and were still avoiding the matrimonial plunge.

Because of the row she causes in separating the aunt and her *fiancé* Miss Billie is locked in her room for four days by way of punishment. She is there in the last act, fascinatingly, one might say intimately, arrayed in a pair of pink silk pajamas, when she sends them all word that she has taken bichlorid of mercury. They rush to her and discover the ruse, but not until she has extracted a proposal of marriage from the bachelor of her choice. After which she reappears beautifully gowned for the betrothal kiss. The new play is Billie at her Burkiest, and seems likely to please even those adorers who resent her recent marriage with Florenz Ziegfeld.

WIDELY CONTRASTED PERSONALITIES

The spring plays in New York served to bring forward several interesting personalities. Mme. Olga Petrova, for one, in a play called "Panthéa." Mme. Petrova for the last two years has been appearing in vaudeville. She came to America four years ago as one of the attractions of the first bill at the now defunct Folies Bergère, the forerunner of the cabaret in the East. In "Panthéa" she steps forth as an emotional actress. Of course, all actresses, technically, are emotional actresses, but unless their art embraces an effective

show of hysteria, they are never charged with it. Mme. Petrova's character in "Panthea" is that of a free-thinking, free-living Russian lady who, because of her broader understanding of another lady's husband, runs away with him. She helps him to express his genius as a composer, but in the end she is obliged to stab an unruly baron who comes between them, which gets them all into trouble. Mme. Petrova, in method, suggests Mme. Alla Nazimova, and she has made a most favorable impression on the New York reviewers.

Another to arrive late in the season was young Ernest Truex, who played the name part in David Belasco's "Good Little Devil" through last season and a part of this. In a new detective comedy called "The Dummy," written by the authors of "The Argyle Case," Mr. Truex plays a boy of sixteen whose vaulting ambition it is to be a "detectuv." So persistent is he, and so much alive, that he attracts the attention of a professional sleuth and, because of his size, is used as a decoy in locating a gang of kidnapers. His exaggerated sense of responsibility is the basis of most of the comedy, but through the play are woven threads of adventure and sentiment that, coupled with the appealing performance of Mr. Truex, make "The Dummy" unusually good entertainment.

Then there is Gaby Deslys. When Gaby arrived in America, as well press-agented as any freak that Mr. Barnum ever added to his circus, New York was inclined to accept her coldly. Only her display of very original gowns or her daring refusal to wear hardly any gown at all, kept alive the curiosity to see her. Being a willing child, however, when she found Harry Pilcer at the Winter Garden, and learned that he was eager to teach her all he knew of the new style of stage dancing, a combination of romp and "wrestle," she turned to and worked as hard as any chorus-girl to make a place for herself. Gradually she gained friends, and now she apparently is as popular on Broadway as she was unpopular with her critics during her recent tour of the coun-

try. In the revival of "The Girl from Kay's," renamed "The Belle of Bond Street" in her honor, Gaby plays the part of the wise little milliner and looks it. Sam Bernard has repeated his old success as the rich boulevardier, *Hoggenheimer*.

THE HEROINE OF "THE MIRACLE MAN"

When George Cohan announced his intention of dramatizing Frank Packard's story, "The Miracle Man," there was much speculation as to whom he would choose to play the heroine. It would be a difficult matter, declared experts, to find an actress fitted by temperament and style for this unusual rôle. Evidently Mr. Cohan did not think so, for practically his first selection was for this part, and Miss Gail Kane was the actress named. She is an English girl. At the Little Theater, in "The Affairs of Anatol," she was one of the most charming of the "affairs," and all this season she has been the leading woman in "Seven Keys to Baldpate."

Another newcomer among leading ingénues is Inez Plummer, who is just now helping Frank Craven with "Too Many Cooks." Miss Plummer is a Syracuse girl. For thirty-five years her father has been a theatrical manager, and during eighteen years of that time he swore that if his daughter should ever ask him to let her go on the stage he would refuse his consent. So she did not ask him. She was rehearsing her first part with a stock company in Mr. Plummer's own theater before he even suspected her intentions. Which so surprised him that he allowed her to continue.

Julian Eltinge is more of an artist than a freak of nature, for which I'm sure we are all duly thankful. The excuse for the facetious references to him as "the best-looking woman on the stage" may be found by a glance at the picture gallery. As a popular entertainer his yearly profits are probably as great as those of any individual star in America. His newest play is "The Crinoline Girl," in which, as an amateur detective, he assumes the disguise suggested by the title to capture the principal operator of a gang of thieves.

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The Forest of Eden*

By

Francis William Sullivan

*A full length book novel,
printed complete in this issue*

CHAPTER I

TRAILS MEET



DAN SILVER, the drive cook, and his assistants aboard the wannigan cursed with a fervor that was almost prayer as their ungainly craft yawed and veered in the eddies of the freshet-strong river. A youth at each end, pike-pole armed, sought to keep the nose of the square scow pointed down-stream. Silver himself, at the ungainly sweep in the stern, seconded their efforts while he condemned the entire outfit in his charge—provisions, "van" supplies, lanterns, axes, and sundry. Well he might, for everything upon which fifty men depended lay before him in the belly of his craft.

"Whar ye figger to camp t'-night?" shouted the youth with the rear pike-pole.

"Back-set beach around the next bend, God willin'," wheezed Dan.

Less than two hundred yards away the river, narrow and swift, made a sharp turn to the right, and here at the water's edge the gnarled black arms of a windfallen tree thrust themselves up out of the flood, a real menace to the wannigan.

"Lively, you fellers!" snarled Silver.

The crew labored madly to drive her out into the main current that swept safely round the nearing point. It was killing work and, despite the icy chill in the late May air, the men streamed with perspiration when at last the long fingers of the submerged tree scratched along the side and passed by.

"Ah!" sighed the cook in fluent cookese, "thank Heaven that's over!" He wiped his forehead with his damp shirt-sleeve and cleared his eyes. "Right there ahead on that beach is where—" he re-

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sumed, only to stop abruptly as his eyes rested upon the spot, a dirty yellow crescent of sand laved by a languid back-set in the current.

For a moment amazement held him speechless. Then, "Who the—what the—Somebody's in my camp!" he bellowed at last, his unvented spleen rising.

The cookees ventured furtive glances. They, too, saw the white A-tent gleaming against the dark green of the second-growth forest, the yellow flicker of the fire, and the thin column of blue smoke drifting off to the southeast. They observed, also, a man in woods garb standing at the water's edge watching them intently.

"Swing her in out o' the current!" bawled Silver. "I'll see who's goin' to take my camps!"

With infinite pains the cumbersome scow was separated from the all too sportive swift water and directed into the little crescent of shelter. But not without accompanying developments. As she finally obeyed the persuasions of her guardians, like an obstinate old lady with a will of her own, the bedeviled current gave her a twist and a slap behind that sent her twirling toward the rapidly nearing beach.

And now the humiliation of grounding the heavy wannigan, with her tons of equipment, presented itself. Dan Silver knew that the tale of it would become a classic in all the north camp country. But another, more potent reason urged him. The jam-crew, heading the big Burchard & Hill drive, had no time to pry loose and launch his ridiculed flag-ship. Something must be done!

The revolving scow had already covered half the distance toward the beach, still drawn by snapping threads of current, when Silver discovered a black, water-soaked log wedged tight between two rocks ahead and to his right. He calculated the two necessary leaps ashore with his eye and then called for the stern mooring-line. This one of the cookees brought, and, coiling it, he poised on the edge of the sluggish wannigan and waited.

Along the banks, brave in fresh green, the silver birches patrolled the river. Behind them the dank, cold depths of the forest rose gradually to the bald crest of a hill, beyond which, when mounted, could be seen other bristling hills melting into one another like the waves of the sea. Now, deep within the wood aisles, rang

the early bird songs, and there was in the air a faint scent of piny flavors, yielded at the bidding of the warm sun. The river, brown and loud-voiced in freshet, shouted the cry of a million rills and submitted to the harness of man's will, for following the wannigan came a thumping, rippling tide of logs, cramming the river from shore to shore, and extending back as far as the eye could see, urgent, crowding, almost human in their importunity.

Of habitation or civilization there was none; of human beings but the few that necessity or exigency had placed there—the uncouth, good-natured lumber-jacks, the poised cook and his frightened assistants, the man in wilderness dress who stood immobile, watching.

At last, the moment having come, Silver, mooring-rope in hand, leaped for the foothold he sought. But lack of practise in the lumberman's art, and the fact that his boots were not "corked," proved his undoing. His feet shot out from under him on the slippery log and he rolled into the icy water, at this point only breast-deep. A roar of laughter, explosive and genuine, rang out suddenly, and Silver, snarling with fury, looked up to see the stranger on the bank in uncontrollable mirth.

This was the last straw to the cook's already overburdened temper. Furious, he started wading ashore, the battered black derby still clamped tight to his head, his face congested. At the bank a shout recalled him to the necessity of still saving the wannigan.

That torment had now surged forward parallel to him, almost upon the far tip of the crescent, and, with the idea of impeding her progress, he scrambled up the bank and attempted to snub the mooring-rope about a stump. But not quickly enough. He had taken but one turn when the rope, tautened and, unable to hold the scow, he was dragged struggling along the shore. A second stump called upon ripped out of its bed of rotten leaf-mold, and only with the third did Silver secure turns enough to check the wannigan. She finally came to rest directly in front of the hilarious gentleman and his white A-tent, and narrowly escaped crushing the end of his green-painted canoe.

The stranger was no more than the average height and rather slight in build. He was dressed in a brown-and-red mackinaw, blue-flannel shirt, and corduroy

THE FOREST OF EDEN

trousers that disappeared into the tops of high-laced buckskin shoepacks. On his head was a battered felt hat. Now, exhausted with mirth, he turned to where Dan Silver was making fast the mooring-rope.

The cook, with a last savage tug, set sail for the stranger with no uncertain intention. The latter, observing the advance, sobered. He remained with his feet far apart and his arms akimbo, just as he had stood while laughing—a posed but discomposed statue of mirth.

The cook, stocky, gray-haired, and purple-visaged, strode grinding through the sand and pebbles and squared himself in front of the stranger.

"What do you see so damned funny around here?" he demanded.

The stranger regarded him with an expression half of amusement, half of conciliation. Then he shrugged his shoulders and edged back. "Why, nothing much," he said with an uncertain laugh, "only it *was* funny, you know, the way you fell in the water."

"It was, eh?" Silver took a short step nearer, his great, horny fists dangling by his thighs. "Pretty soft, ain't it, for you sports to come along here and laugh at men that have to work for a livin'. An' what are you doin' in my camp?" His voice rose truculently.

"How is this your camp?" argued the other stoutly, knowing himself within his rights. "This is free forest."

"You *think* it is! This place's been a Burchard & Hill drive camp for three years, and it's mine, I tell ye!"

"Who are you—Burchard & Hill?" The tone was partly conciliatory, partly contemptuous. It acted like a goad.

"No, but, by Hades, I'm the cook, and you get out of this camp!" Silver advanced another step.

On the river the first lines of the great log drive rounded the bend, mumbling and fretting. In the midst of them, motionless and upright, leaning upon their peaveys, rode half a dozen men—men whose swiftness of eye, hand, and brain controlled and directed the blind, surging host. Nonchalant, perfectly balanced, at ease, these vikings of the wild viewed the incipient trouble on shore with huge delight and contributed unsought opinions and advice as they passed by. Their last shouts reached Silver faintly as, still leaning on

their peaveys, tall, statuesque, they swept around the point below.

And after them came the endless host of logs, bobbing, rubbing roughly against one another, muttering the swan song of the forest.

"You've no right to drive me out of this camp." The stranger was all for peace now, with the law on his side.

"Ye wun't go, then, eh?" Silver's bloodshot eyes smoldered as the other's faint defiance stirred the bully in him.

"No. You've got no right—"

Smack! Smack! Both the cook's fists found their mark on the stranger's jaw, and, barely able to hold his feet, the latter staggered back, crying out, both hands clapped to his face. Silver, surging with battle lust, and eager to recompense his feelings for the disasters of the afternoon, closed in with a guttural snarl of triumph.

At that instant the flap of the A-tent flew back and a woman stumbled out, looking about her dazedly, as if she had just awakened from sleep. A moment later, catching sight of the unequal combat, she cried out, startled, and ran forward.

Dan Silver, following up his attack, sent home one hard, swift blow, and his victim fell sprawling against a stump, where he rolled over and lay motionless. Then the cook, true to the code of the lumberman, leaped for his man, his feet drawn up under him for the bone-breaking kick. He had not heard the woman, but now, in mid air, a frail body collided with him from the side, throwing him off his balance and sending him clawing and kicking in the dirt.

Simultaneously help appeared from another quarter. Leaping swiftly and surely from log to log, carrying his peavey as a balancing-pole, a man approached, zig-zagging to shore across the log-carpeted surface of the river. A dozen steps and he sprang to land and threw his peavey to one side.

And now Silver, cursing savagely, scrambled up to front the woman, who met him fearlessly with blazing eyes. The next instant steps sounded, and the log-runner seized the cook by the collar and whirled him around.

"You dirty dog!" he said in a calm, hard voice, "what are you doing?" A pair of steel-gray eyes held the other unwaveringly.

"This man here took my camp and wouldn't get off—"

"Your camp!" The newcomer's hand, open-palmed and quick as light, struck the cook's leathery cheek with a sound like the crack of a pistol. Pale with fury, Silver reeled for a moment and then gathered himself and leaped blindly to the attack. His opponent did not shift his position, but waited the fraction of a second with narrowed lids. Then his fist shot out with the drive of a piston-rod and caught the cook on the point of the chin. The fellow went down like a log and lay without the twitch of a muscle.

After noting the effect of his work for an instant, the newcomer turned to the woman who, pale but unflinching, had stood quietly by during the swift retribution.

"Good day," he said hesitatingly, removing his battered felt hat. "I'm mighty sorry this has happened, but I couldn't get here any sooner."

"Of course not. Thank you for coming when you did." Her voice was quiet and low. "Who is this man?" She pointed to the prostrate Silver.

"He's the cook of our drive. I'm the river boss; Bream is my name. Perhaps we'd better see if the other man is hurt. I'm more grieved than I can say that this should have occurred."

Together they went to where the stranger still lay unconscious, face downward. In the struggle his hat had fallen off, and now a trickle of blood ran down his right cheek from a cut the stump had inflicted on his head.

"Oh, he's bleeding!" cried the woman fearfully, kneeling beside him. "He's badly hurt. Oh, Allan, Allan!"

"I'll get some water." Bream ran to the river's edge, and using his hat as a scoop, returned with it brimming.

From somewhere about her the woman produced a handkerchief, and while he knelt beside her she bathed the pale cheek and the cut on the top of the head. Presently, handing her the hat, Bream turned and straightened the figure so that it lay flat on the ground. As he did so he saw that the man's lower jaw was twisted grotesquely to one side.

"Oh, what is it? What is the matter with his face?" she cried, displaying swift feminine emotion for the first time since Bream's arrival.

"I'm afraid his jaw's broken. Let me see."

He knelt beside the motionless figure and worked the jaw-bone with his fingers. "Yes, it is. You'd better let me fix it before he comes to. Have you anything that will make a bandage?"

"Yes, in the tent. Wait." Once more she was cool and equal to the occasion. She disappeared, and in a few moments returned with a strip of white cloth evidently torn from some garment. Bream straightened the broken bone, fitting the edges of the fracture with a rough skill that the necessities of the woods had forced upon him, and while he held them in place the woman passed the bandage firmly many times under the jaw and over the head, at the same time binding up the cut on the scalp.

"Now we'll throw some water in his face and bring him to," said Bream.

"You don't think his skull is fractured, do you?" she asked nervously.

"No, I don't think so. I saw him fall, and the blow didn't look hard enough for that."

A few minutes of work and the man stirred and moaned, his hands instinctively seeking his face. Bream gently held them away until consciousness had returned and they had raised the other to a sitting posture.

"Don't try and talk, my friend," he counseled. "Your jaw's broken and we've tied it up. We're going to try and get you to town as soon as we can."

"To town?" asked the woman quickly.

"Is there a town near here? What town?"

"Hampton, where the big lumber mills are. That's where my drive is bound. It's only about thirty miles, and there is a doctor there. Your—this gentleman ought to see a doctor."

"Pardon me if I have forgotten the amenities," she said, coloring faintly. "Our name is Mackenzie, Mr. and Mrs. Allan Mackenzie. If you will help me to pack up, Mr. Bream, I think I can make it to Hampton safely in the canoe."

Her tone held no hint of doubt in her ability to accomplish the feat, and to Bream the statement was but a part with the grit and control she had displayed all through. Nevertheless, he looked at her with a flash of admiration, feeling that sense of warmth that, in efficient men, is only aroused by efficiency.

"Oh, I hardly meant that," he smiled. "I wouldn't think of it for a moment. I'll see you down to Hampton myself."

"But your bossing—" suggested Mrs. Mackenzie.

"Will take care of itself," he finished. "My foremen could drive logs through the Grand Cañon blindfolded and riding backward. Now, if you'll pardon me, I'll run out and give a few orders. Start packing your duffel, and I'll be back to help you as soon I can. We'll have to portage half a mile before we can take the water."

Bream turned away briskly and almost stumbled over Dan Silver, who had begun to groan and stir as consciousness returned. The boss dragged him to the river's edge, dashed water in his face, and shook him into his senses.

"Hustle and set your camp up," he ordered. "I'm going to Hampton ahead of the drive, and if I hear anything more about you, you'll get twice what I gave you this afternoon."

"All right, boss," mumbled Silver, and staggered away toward the wannigan.

Without a moment's loss of time Bream now ran out over the logs on the river, motioning toward him one of his men who was riding near the other shore. The two zigzagged together, leaping and bounding.

"Trot down to the head-end and tell the boys to hang the drive at Miller's dam till to-morrow morning," he ordered. "Silver got ugly and mussed up a stranger in here. I'm taking him up to Hampton. He can make a lot of trouble if he wants to. Up to me to do what I can."

CHAPTER II

THE JOURNEY DOWN

THE start was made an hour later from a point below the long chute at Miller's dam. The green canoe, portaged by two stalwart lumber-jacks, received the injured man, the duffel, the girl, and Bream from a low, flat rock, and without ceremony the river boss pushed out.

Allan Mackenzie, suffering considerably, reclined between the thwarts upon the folded A-tent, speechless, but groaning now and then as he sought vainly to ease his throbbing head. In the bow knelt his wife, swinging her paddle with the force and skill of an expert.

As they made swift and silent progress

with the hurrying current Bream reflected on the sudden, unsuspected direction his day's work had taken. Because a fool cook had lost his temper the finish of the drive must be entrusted to less efficient hands, the owners laid open to annoyance and perhaps expense, and himself converted into a guide for the strangers as well as a buffer between them and the firm.

This latter he did not resent so much but the former hurt his pride, putting him as it did in a class with the Indians and lazy lumber-jacks who labored with tourists through the fishing and hunting seasons.

In the present instance, however, he felt that his feelings would suffer very little, for it was not long before his practised eye distinguished these travelers from the usual city-bred "sports" out for the early trout fishing. Their equipment had the "feel" and appearance of long use and was of material and quality that made ludicrous the thought of a sporting-goods store.

Both the stranger and his wife wore that air of accustomedness to their situation and surroundings for which there is no counterfeit, and had not these marks been enough, the girl's quick, competent breaking of camp would have settled the question of her ability.

"Experienced on the trail, I'll swear," he told himself. "And in handling a canoe, too," he added presently, noting the skilful economy of effort with which Mrs. Mackenzie did her full share of the paddling.

"Look like good people," was the next step in his cogitations, after a quarter of an hour's study of his companions.

The man's face was smooth, with a high forehead and a delicacy of feature that set him apart at once from the class of men with whom Bream was accustomed to associate. The girl's appearance was vague to him, since he could only see her back, but his memory of her was satisfactory. Silhouetted against the sunset in her suit of soft, yellow buckskin, he could see the lithe but full roundness of her figure and a grace and harmony of motion that spoke aloud of blood training. The artless set of her shapeless felt hat with its flame-colored tongue of feather at the side was perfection.

"More like my own people," Bream

mused, realizing blankly that it was six years since he had listened to cultivated speech or thought of the little amenities that go to prove the worth-whileness of civilization. "Too bad he's hurt. I think we'd make friends."

They were traveling directly west now along a blinding path of red-gold that the sun, bloody through lavender mists, threw down before them. The trees glided by in stately unison on either side, dark and sinister-looking as they approached, warm, rosy, etched in clearest detail when they had passed. A lazily flapping fish-hawk preceded them down-stream, alighting now and then on the tip of some blasted pine; sparrows and blackbirds fought noisily in the tree-tops; occasionally a crested kingfisher fell like a plummet into the water and rose clutching his silvery prey and scattering showers of rosy pearl from his glistening wings.

Bream rested his paddle and pulled out his watch, a thick, silver affair.

"Mr. Mackenzie," he said, "we can't make Hampton to-night. I'm sorry, but I don't dare risk the river. You see, another drive has gone in ahead of us and I'm afraid of submerged logs. However, we can go on for an hour longer if that is satisfactory."

The injured man nodded, unable to speak, and Bream looked at the girl, who had turned.

"Perhaps you would like to knock off a while, Mrs. Mackenzie," he suggested. "I can manage the canoe easily in this current."

"If you don't mind, I'd rather paddle," she said, smiling. "I'm a very dissatisfied passenger."

He assented pleasantly and a moment later the steady, rhythmic swing of the paddles was resumed.

At last, when the sun had dropped below the pine-clad hills, they landed at a little sand beach on the up-river side of a point, and Bream found that his estimate of his companions had been correct. There was no hanging back on the girl's part with work to be done. She took hold at making camp almost before Bream had hauled up the canoe.

"You don't know how sorry I am that you've had to come with us," she said as they made Mackenzie comfortable against the foot of a tree. "I can imagine your annoyance."

"Oh, the drive is all right now," he replied deprecatingly. "As a matter of fact, I am rather glad to get in to Hampton early. I want to hear the sawmills sing." They laughed. "And now, sir," he said to Mackenzie, "if there's anything I can do for you, be sure to let me know. That's what I'm here for."

The other nodded gingerly, his large, black eyes studying Bream's face. Then he indicated his wife and took her hand as if to say: "Thanks, but she will do whatever I need."

Next Bream chopped and brought in a quantity of *chicots* or dry wood and left Mrs. Mackenzie to build the fire while he erected the A-tent and cut his own bed of spruce boughs.

"My kind of people, all right," he told himself with a wag of the head, "and they've just about concluded I'm theirs too, from the looks of things. At least the girl has. After all, I may not be such a barbarian as I feel."

When he had perfected the sleeping accommodations he returned to the fire to cook supper, but found the girl before him and busy. No tourist peevishness and laziness here, that was evident. He watched her for a few moments as she deftly mixed the flapjacks. Then he quietly sliced the bacon, set the tin of beans to boil in a saucepan, and arranged the stones for the coffee-pot. But his activities were not long-lived, for somehow she managed to relieve him of most of his duties.

"Really, I shall be spoiled if you do so much," he laughingly protested.

"You can watch the coffee and think how good everything is going to be," she said.

"That's a death sentence," he retorted; "I'm starving now."

She replied in kind and they maintained a cheerful conversation that fulfilled the conventional requirements of the occasion. Charmed by her friendly tact and courtesy, Bream relaxed into the enjoyment of a social intercourse that was as delightful as it was novel. There seemed, on her part, the attitude of one who entertains a chance guest, and her perfect ease once more stirred in him long-sleeping, pleasant memories.

Their conversation was not uninterrupted, however, for Mackenzie was restless and nervous and laid a heavy tax of

strength and effort upon the girl. This she met with unvarying sweetness and patience, despite Bream's discovery that his demands were less for physical necessities than for the mere presence of her near him, or her touch.

Sitting awkwardly against the tree-trunk, his eyes never ceased to follow her as she moved about, and he seemed only waiting for her to pass near him that he might take her hand. At times there was a look of wistfulness, almost of pleading, in his eyes that seemed to Bream to express more than just a desire for sympathy for his injury.

Returning from one of her trips to Mackenzie's side she stopped and examined the blanket-covered pile of spruce boughs that Bream had built for himself to windward of the fire.

"Do you think you have blankets enough?" she asked.

"Indeed yes," he replied. "This is luxury after sleeping in wet clothes and bedding for a month."

"Your drive is long, then?" There was real interest in her tone.

"A hundred and ten miles, and we're at it regularly fourteen hours a day, most of the time in ice-water. Being on the move it's almost impossible for us to dry things out. But that's the sort of thing that keeps us B. & H. river-hogs happy."

"B. & H.?" She knelt by the fire to test the flapjacks.

"Yes, that's the firm I'm driving for, Burchard & Hill. Their camps are north in the Oseko district, and they use both this river and the Oseko to drive their logs."

"I've heard of them." She nodded slowly as she emptied into a tea-basin some tinned soup she had warmed for her husband. "And I've been through that section. It's fine timber. What other firms are cutting up there?"

Bream colored with pleasure at her intelligence concerning his work, of which the ordinary woman would know so little, and she at once took on a new value to him.

"No other firms are cutting on the Oseko that I know of," he said. "We've always had a pretty good thing of it up there. May I ask when it was you were in that country?"

She paused reflectively. "Two or three years ago, it seems to me. I don't exactly

remember. And now, Mr. Bream, if you will loosen Mr. Mackenzie's bandages I will try and feed him a little of this soup. He must eat something."

But when they came to the actual operation, the slight effort of swallowing even liquid food caused Mackenzie such pain that he finally motioned them to desist, and departed to the tent to try to get a little sleep.

Complete darkness had come when the two sat down on a windfallen log to make their own meal, granite dishes in hand, and with it had come the chill of the north land. The chatter of the river tumbling over the stones had subsided into a murmur and the black trees clicked and rustled intermittently as the gusts of wind sighed through them. Overhead the sky appeared like polished cobalt, pricked here and there by twinkling diamond points of light.

Presently, as the girl encouraged him, Bream described more at length the perils, monotonies, and interests of his wild life, using as a background the Oseko region with which she appeared to be familiar. For more than half an hour, while Bream smoked and talked, she listened attentively, interjecting questions and comments now and then that betrayed more than a superficial knowledge of the subject. He was surprised at this, and said so.

"Oh, you see, I have lived all my life in the north, so I ought to know something about it," she rejoined. Then she sprang up to clear away the supper things. Bream, sure of defeat should he protest that she leave the work to him, joined her unobtrusively and they finished what little remained to be done together.

When all was put away and Bream had pulled the tarpaulin over the duffel beneath the upturned canoe, he looked around just in time to catch her in the midst of a frankly sleepy yawn. He laughed and pulled out his watch.

"Mercy!" she cried, "what a thing to do! But it must be frightfully late."

"Half past eight," he told her.

"That's midnight for me. And we must start early to-morrow I expect."

"I think so," he said; "the sooner Mr. Mackenzie sees a doctor the better."

"Well, then, good night, Mr. Bream. You have done us a great service by coming to-day. Thank you." She held out her hand frankly and smiled. He took it,

small and warm, in one of his big, rough ones and with the other removed his hat.

"Good night," he said, touched by the little formality.

She turned away and he stood bare-headed until she had disappeared behind the flap of the tent.

Then he replenished the fire and sat down before it, pipe in hand. The obligations of the day past, his mind turned to other things, matters whose consideration had been banished by the results of Silver's attack—the arrival of the drive at Hampton, the cutting out at the sorting and mill booms, the checking up at the office.

He outlined his work thoroughly in his mind and then looked forward beyond it to the short period of rest that intervened before the cutting again started in the forest. And doing so, his heart beat a little faster, for during that month he hoped to carry into action certain plans that had been ripening in his mind for the last six years. His last concern as he turned in was the hope that Mackenzie would not make trouble for Burchard & Hill.

Hampton is a typical lumbering town. It is divided in the middle by the East River, owing to the fact that the big saw-mills have occupied the advantageous points on either bank, and the workmen have settled accordingly. One thousand souls is the maximum of its population, and these are housed in little weather-beaten, unsheathed, unpapered houses that straggle along dusty, unpaved streets that end either in the forest or the river.

Of course there are the two or three pretentious red-brick residences of mill-owners that bulk large here and there amid their neighbors, and these, like the castle in the medieval town, are a pride and moral support to Hampton. But the mills themselves are the *pièces de résistance* of the region.

Hampton is a peaceful town and, in the summer, ravishing. From the edges of the lake that is as blue as heaven itself rise steep, wooded hills whose varicolored foliage forms a mosaic in unimaginable greens against a constantly changing sky. The forest comes down to the very ends of the short streets, and the long howl of the winter wolves is not strange in the land. All day long the mellow clank of invisible

cow-bells sounds from the wooded hillsides.

To this village came Bream and his companions about ten o'clock in the morning, having been on the trail since an hour after daylight.

They landed at a low string-piece on the inner side of the pier and set out immediately to find the doctor. Mackenzie, whose condition had improved remarkably overnight, was almost in favor of foregoing medical attention, but this Bream would not consider. His faith in his own bone-setting had not matured so far.

Dr. Cavanaugh was at home. He was a white-haired man with blue eyes and a hook nose, and had formerly been a famous practitioner in Toronto. Now, however, he lived in Hampton six months of the year for the sake of the fishing and hunting and was an unfailing friend to the lumbermen in time of need. He had been in town less than a week when Bream brought Mackenzie to him. He looked over the work of the river boss, grunting and nodding his head.

"Very good. You ought to be a doctor, Dick!" he said as he prepared an aseptic bandage. "I couldn't have done much better myself."

"Is the fracture set true, then?" asked the young man.

"Perfectly," the doctor assured him. "The practise you woods fellows get enables you to do a suprisingly good job at times."

"We're not much at bone-setting," laughed Bream, "but we have plenty of cuts to look after. It's a wonder some of our axmen don't chop their own heads off, they're so clumsy."

When all was done, Cavanaugh put a hand on Mackenzie's shoulder and fixed him with his bright eagle eye. "Now sir," he said, "you had better stay in Hampton for at least a week. I must be sure that everything is doing nicely before you start away, especially if you are taking the trail. A jaw is a very handy and valuable article and must be treated accordingly."

This edict put upon Bream the necessity for finding the Mackenzies a place to live. First he interviewed Mother McCracken, whose house had been his home ever since his first arrival in Hampton. But he found that, owing to the arrival of an artist and his wife, the little cottage was full. He was directed across town to

a Mrs. Barry, the wife of an absent camp clerk, and convoyed his amused charges through the cow-infested streets, humorously pointing out fictitious places of interest to right and left.

Mrs. Barry proved to be a woman of some education who had sunk mentally beneath the burdens of her hard life in the lumber towns and camps. She was gaunt and hollow-eyed, but her house was clean and she had a vacant room which she would have let for the sake of the company it brought had the prospective tenants refused her monetary demands.

When the Mackenzies had arranged to their satisfaction, Bream turned to the husband:

"I must hurry down to the mill and report," he said, "but I'll have a couple of the boys bring your duffel up to the house. And I'll look in on you this evening to see that everything is going all right."

He held out his hand and the other shook it warmly. Then he lifted his hat to Mrs. Mackenzie and strode away, the calks of his heavy boots digging yellow pock-marks in the weather-beaten wooden sidewalk.

Mackenzie, watching the straight, stalwart figure recede, smiled cautiously, his heavy lids drooping half-way over his jet black eyes, an action that gave his rather handsome face an unexpected calculating expression.

CHAPTER III

AT THE POINT OF DECISION

BREAM proceeded immediately to the Burchard & Hill mill, where he was welcomed with a brief hand-shake by Molloy and profane shouts of greeting on the part of the lumber-jacks. It was plain that as far as the rank and file of the industry went Bream was not unpopular, a negative distinction vastly coveted and rarely attained.

His reputation as a slave-driver, skilful lumberman, and invincible fighter was current through all the north country and had been won in many a crisis where quick thought and instant action had saved the day either for the owners, the men, or himself. And it was the fact of this executive ability that had raised him from swamper to jobber and river boss in six years.

Now, at twenty-eight, he commanded the hardest, wildest, most skilful drive gang in the B. & H. employ and the supreme acknowledgment of a river hog's skill was assignment to his camp.

The B. & H. office was a long, low-raftered room up one flight of stairs at the land end of the big mill. It consisted of two compartments, one larger, where the clerks sat on high stools against old-fashioned slanting desks, and one smaller where Hill, the "woods partner" of the firm, had his official being. To this Bream made his way, answering hearty salutations as he clumped over the pock-marked floor of the main office.

A roaring command to enter followed his knock and he pushed open the office door. Hill, a huge, bearish man, almost concealed behind a heavy gray-shot black beard, leaned back in his swivel chair, his uncalked boots on the desk before him. At sight of his visitor he held out a great, hairy hand, which Bream shook, and ponderously removed his feet from their support.

"Well, what brings you in?" he growled ungraciously, kicking a near-by chair in the other's direction. Bream captured it and sat down, accustomed from long experience to the uncouthness of the owner.

"Silver got in trouble with his wannigan and knocked up a stranger," he announced succinctly. "Incidentally, the stranger had camped on our old No. 12 camp-site, and that seemed to hurt Silver more'n being laughed at. Anyway, Dan broke his jaw, and I brought him and his wife down in their canoe to see Doc Cavanaugh."

"Damn that cook! If it wa'n't that the boys like his grub—" Hill's heavy, brutal face was menacing. "Stranger an' his wife, eh? Who are they?"

"Mackenzie is the name. Mr. and Mrs. Allan Mackenzie."

"Mackenzie." Hill mused a moment. "Never heard of 'em. Where are they from?"

"I don't know."

"Where were they headed when you found 'em?"

"I don't know that either."

"An' you didn't learn anything more on the trip down?"

"No."

"Nice, sociable party!"

Bream felt suddenly chagrined as he

realized that he knew almost nothing of his companions. With an uncomfortable schoolboy shame he recalled his detailed account of his own doings the night before. "I'm more of a barbarian than I thought," he told himself.

"How'd they take it?" inquired Hill, his question rising to a bellow. "Stranger ugly?"

"Don't know; he can't talk yet."

"Wife ugly?"

Bream grinned: "No, pretty."

Hill's eyes glistened momentarily. He smote his thigh mightily and roared a tremendous "Ha!"

"You coon dog, you!" he exploded with ponderous innuendo and spat into the huge receptacle beside his desk.

Bream filled his pipe and lit it. "Drive ought to be down in about three days," he said. "Borwell and Dorlon will bring it in."

"How much you got?"

"About twenty million, but a lot of it's small."

"I figgered it would be. Worst timber in the hull tract, ain't it?"

"Yes. I'd hoped for a bigger drive. How did they do on the Oseko this year?"

"The two drives there come to about thirty-five million altogether. Them, with yours, makes the biggest year's business we ever done." He paused for a moment as if with satisfaction, only to add in a threatening growl: "but it ain't the biggest year's work we're a goin' to do."

As his subordinate did not deny the assertion, he got to his feet and started lumbering up and down the little room, turning slowly at each end like a caged bear. For five minutes this continued. Then he suddenly swung about upon the river boss.

"Sight any cruisers in your section this winter or spring?" he demanded. (A cruiser or landlooker is one who is prospecting country for valuable timber.)

Bream ruminated for a moment, staring out of the window across the roofs of the little town.

"Well!" barked Hill, irritated at the hesitation. "Can't you remember?"

Bream, annoyed in turn by this outburst, regarded his employer with steely gray eyes.

"Of course," he said coldly; "but I'm taking care not to forget. There was Joe Rainy and Jack Dufresne, but they had

only been running their regular trap lines, as they do every winter. Then, less than a month ago, there were two 'sports' with guides out for the early fishing. I don't believe they were cruising—at least the boys couldn't find any calipers in their duffel when they stopped at the camp for dinner. Outside of that, Mr. Hill, I don't remember a stranger in the woods."

There was silence as the older man, stopping in his tracks, studied his subordinate closely, rudely, almost suspiciously. Bream returned to his inspection of the village roofs through the distorting medium of the grimy window. Such interviews as this tried his patience and good nature far worse than the stubbornest jam on the drive.

Apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, Hill turned away at last, tearing at a plug of black-strap tobacco with his yellow teeth and resuming his bearlike shamble. Again several minutes passed.

"Did you cruise that Abimoming district, as I ordered?" he demanded next, hulking across the floor to a huge, faded map on the opposite wall. Bream, marveling anew at the gigantic size of the man, followed.

"Yes," he said, "I covered it pretty well last winter. It's a splendid piece of timber."

He drew a grimy pencil from his pocket and indicated the position of the land in question. The map was drawn to a large scale and showed clearly the layout of the lumber country. Three rivers embraced it, the Oseko, with its tributaries to the east, the East River in the middle, and the Abimoming on the west. On both sides and between the Oseko and East rivers, half-way up to the headwaters, lay the country that Burchard & Hill had already cut or were cutting. North of this, and well up to the sources, was the timber land they controlled. Still north of this, and a little to the west, across a height of land, was a sort of rough Y formed by the junction of the two branches of the Abimoming. Within was the timber Bream had cruised during the early spring.

This he pointed out to Hill, interspersing his remarks with descriptions of the country, watercourses, and timber. The owner listened intently. When Bream had finished he lost himself in thought, occasionally rumbling in his great chest so that the air vibrated.

"Them sections in the Y are the key to the hull country above it!" he suddenly declared, striding once more to the map. "Yes, sir! The only way to haul logs to water from up higher is through them. Ain't it so, Bream?"

"Practically it is," admitted the other, "but it could be managed on the small upper streams in good years."

"Humph! Never!" sneered the owner. "Cost too much." He took a double turn up and down the room. "By the way, what's your description of that good pine in the Y?"

Bream, who had been consulting a battered red-leather note-book as he talked, ran slowly through the pages for a few moments. Then he read the "description," or location, in terms, first of the township and then of the sections and ranges south and west.

"H-m! Not so big as I thought. How much will it run?"

"All above eight inches will total in the neighborhood of fifteen million feet, if my cruising is any account. I'm not a very practised estimator."

"Fifteen million feet!" Hill muttered the figures to himself, turning away to resume his pacing. For a space he was silent. Then he broke out with a bellow that was half exultation and half scornful laughter: "Only fifteen million feet, thirty thousand dollars, and we could bottle up that country forever. Amen! O-ho! O-ho! Thirty thousand dollars, and God Almighty couldn't touch us!"

Quite involuntarily Bream shrugged, although he made no reply. Hill spoke the truth. With the purchase of that single triangle of land went the control of thousands of acres of timber.

And Burchard & Hill were after it! Was there anything they did not want? Bream's lips tightened, lest he show his scorn, even while he was forced to admire the grasping shrewdness of the intention. It would be a master purchase of public land; a strategic *coup* that would make into fact the already current tradition that Oseko was synonymous with Burchard & Hill, the term in this case indicating a vague region rather than any localized territory.

Almost curiously Bream glanced up at the faded map and studied the inked outlines of the firm's possessions. Vast, prodigal in wealth, commanding both sides of

two rivers, they extended farther north than any camps in that country, north almost to the south banks of the desired Y itself.

Finally the giant clumped back to his chair and sat down heavily, pulling now and then at his beard, scowling blackly, lost in thought.

"We've got to have that," he growled aloud, the air vibrating with his deep bass. "Burchard'll be here in a couple of weeks and I'll talk to him. I guess nobody'll hook the Y in that time." His mouth opened in a defiant grin and he cried "Ha!" scornfully. "It's practically all ours up there, anyway. Every one admits it."

"Every one but the government," laughed Bream. "They're not very sentimental about free, open land, you know. They'll sell if they get a chance."

"They've been sentimental *so* long, I guess they'll continue," growled the owner with finality, turning to his desk.

Bream, recognizing his dismissal, picked up his hat and walked toward the door.

"I'm here if you want anything extra done," he volunteered, his hand on the knob.

"No," said the other. "Take it easy for a couple of days; you'll have it hard enough when your drive gets in. By the way, you might keep close to them strangers and find out what they're aiming to do about the assault. I won't back Silver up in this; it's the third time he's made trouble for us, and he can take his own medicine."

Bream went out and down the stairs into the sawdust street. Then he took his way directly to Mother McCracken's and mounted to the room on the second story that was always ready for him. It was neither a large nor a small room, and just as its size was indefinite, so was the whole atmosphere of it. One felt, however, that it was the lair of a man who clung to the appearance and mirage of a home.

Against the front wall, between the two small windows, was a combination writing-desk and bookcase, its shelves well stocked with favorite volumes in faded bindings. The single iron bed took up the most of one wall and a cheap chiffonier occupied a front corner, where the light from the windows fell upon it, throwing out the several family photographs that leaned against the glass or had been fitted into

the frame. Three chairs, one of them a comfortable patent rocker, comprised the remaining furniture, and against the wall, opposite the bed, a board, studded with nails and canopied with sleazy cotton curtains, furnished a place to hang his clothes.

Throwing on the floor his "turkey," or clothes kit, that he had brought down the river with him, Bream sank into the patent rocker and once more pulled out the discolored red-leather note-book. For fifteen minutes he turned the pages slowly, reading snatches here and there from the timber notes he had so carefully made. Finally he closed it meditatively and threw it on the bed.

"They want that timber—and so do I," he muttered thoughtfully.

Rising, he stepped to the desk, unlocked the single drawer beneath the writing extension, and, after rummaging among a mass of papers, drew forth a flat, brown book stamped with the words "Sawpits National Bank." Sawpits was the larger town forty miles away, at the opposite end of Basque Lake.

Seating himself at the desk, he regarded the balance indicated within ruminatively. It amounted to slightly over nineteen thousand dollars. Mentally he added to this the sum due him for the past eleven months' work, a matter of a thousand dollars, deducting the insignificant amount charged against him for equipment or "van" goods on the company's books.

"It'll buy two-thirds of the best timber in the tract, and then I'll be without a cent to outfit and cut with," he meditated, shaking his head. "But I can't wait any longer. Another month and there won't be a forty to be had in that whole country!"

Dick Bream had reached the parting of the ways—a parting that had loomed larger and larger with each succeeding spring. Six years before, the possessor of five thousand dollars in cash and an infinite capacity for work, he had come to this section to blaze his own trail. Born in St. Paul to comfortable circumstances, and the only child of a good family, he had been educated in the East, and subsequently entered the office of his father's big lumber concern. There he had just begun to make his way in the business when the crash came that changed the course of his life.

An unusually warm winter in the north

country, with its accompanying comparatively light fall of snow, had resulted in the rivers failing to freshet in the spring. As a consequence all but a few small drives were abandoned, leaving thousands of dollars' worth of timber to lie rotting in the forests, a total loss. The Bream Company's difficulties resulting from this misfortune had revealed his father's unsuspected financial weakness, and, with contracts unfulfilled, the firm had gone to the wall. After the settling up of its affairs there remained five thousand dollars, and upon his father's sudden death this came to Dick Bream, his mother having died three years before.

The sudden tragedy of all this had unnerved Bream for the task of reconstruction that he saw before him in St. Paul, and, taking stock of his business resources, he concluded to lay the foundations of his own fortune on the practical basis of personal experience. With this idea, then, he pulled up by the roots all his former associations and relationships and struck north into the virgin Canadian lumber territory, arriving in Hampton just in time to go road-making at thirty-five dollars a month with the first of the Burchard & Hill camps. He had remained with this firm ever since, working up in time to his present position.

During one year and part of another fortune had favored him to the extent that Burchard & Hill, anxious to cut certain outlying stands of timber separate from their main camps, had given him the jobbing contracts, and from these he had made the chief additions to his untouched capital.

With this practical experience behind him, and a fair amount of money in his hands, he felt that the time was ripe to take the step he had contemplated ever since that momentous decision in St. Paul to become a cutter and operator of his own timber.

His knowledge of the logging situation in the region was extensive and accurate—he had spared no effort to make it so—and he knew that, should Burchard & Hill take up that all-important Y on the Oseko, his six years of apprenticeship would go for naught so far as the present province was concerned.

Now, as he stared at his balance in the brown-leather book, the slenderness of his resources was brought home to him heavi-

ly, the more so since he was aware of the financial plenty needed to start a project of this nature. To buy the timber and hold it until he had earned enough to operate he knew would be the height of speculation, owing to the risks from forest fires or wood-ravaging insects.

If he bought he must operate, and he knew that now or never must he buy. How, then, to raise the money?

Several methods presented themselves.

First, he considered securing the timber by outright purchase, with the idea of holding it until he had interested capital in one of the large cities to the south. But this plan he abandoned at once when he realized that his negotiations would probably delay actual logging until the following year, in which case he would be forced to assume a burden of taxation he could not possibly carry.

Next, he ran over in his mind a list of acquaintances from whom he might select a possible partner, good men, all of them, experts in lumber, keen and resourceful, but without the capital that was the prime necessity. He passed them by regretfully but finally.

The third and most favorable method of accomplishing his purpose lay in purchasing the stumpage and floating a loan upon the Sawpits National Bank with it as security. This was simple and feasible, but yet it presented elements that made Bream hesitate. In the first place it brought about no partnership, no communion of heart and head. He would be allied simply with money, a dead, cold thing, lacking brains, activity, or resource. And these, he felt, he must have in another as well as himself. Appreciating fully the hazards of a maiden lumber venture, he realized the necessity of some influence to act as a check or spur upon him should he lose his proper perspective in being too close to the business.

Furthermore, the bank, seeking its own interests first, would be no aid in time of trouble. Should any disastrous chain of circumstances occur, there would be a foreclosure and he would forthwith find himself penniless, once more at the foot of the ladder.

For an hour Bream sat lost in thought, consulting first the red book and then the brown one, lured by the irresistible opportunity, checked by the obstacles that presented themselves. He was roused at last

by the voice of Mother McCracken announcing the midday meal.

He rose, shaking himself roughly, like a dog. "I'll do it somehow!" he muttered grimly as he clumped down-stairs.

CHAPTER IV

GIPSIES OF THE WILD

THERE are certain people between whom friendship is destined from the first. Such was the case with Bream and the Mackenzies. During the two days following his arrival in Hampton he spent much of his time with them and, as Allan Mackenzie gradually entered into the conversations, Bream found himself drawn by a personality as charming in its way as that of the wife. Mackenzie seemed to possess the mental characteristics of the Irish Celt rather than the Scotch, having a ready wit and a mind that leaped nimbly from one subject to another. His dark, handsome face, with its rather high cheek-bones, might have been rugged had it not been for the softening influence of his expressive black eyes and the almost feminine contour of his lips. His hands were long, slender, and restless.

Dr. Cavanaugh frequently made himself one of the party when not off at the trout-holes, for he was a man of considerable parts and enjoyed a variation from the limited social opportunities Hampton afforded. It was, in fact, his presence one evening at Mrs. Barry's that settled the matter of Mackenzie's vengeance against Dan Silver and the Burchard & Hill Company. The four were sitting in the plain little cottage living-room lighted by its single oil lamp and were discussing drink, the constantly live issue as well as the curse of any lumbering country.

"It's a fact that the doctor has the most palatial snake-room in the province," declared Bream solemnly, but with twinkling eyes.

"Snake-room! Goodness, doctor! What is it? A chamber of horrors?" Eloise clasped her hands upon her knees with a delicious shudder.

"For those that are in it, yes," replied Cavanaugh. "All the expeditions that ever sailed to Africa couldn't muster the quantity of puce elephants and plaid zebras that have been seen in that room."

"H-m! I see now," said Mackenzie;

"kind of a padded cell for last staggers, eh?"

"Yes, more's the pity." The doctor was serious now. "I have a big, husky brute by the name of Marty at my place who trusses them up and watches them till they're fit to go on the street again. It's a sickening business, though."

"Yes, but a good work," put in Bream. "You have no idea, Mrs. Mackenzie, how the doctor hopes and plans for us river-hogs—when the fish aren't biting. Easy, there doctor! I'm serious. He is even trying to raise funds for a hospital—Keep him off, won't some of you? He is about to dissect me for revealing his pet ambition."

"How about it, doctor? Defend yourself."

"And it please your lordship, I plead guilty," laughed Cavanaugh, "though Dick has no business to expose me this way. The fact is we need a hospital badly here, not only to take care of the drinking element, but as a place where injured lumber-jacks can come—and there are scores of them every year. I've been working to raise money enough without making an appeal to any church or organization, and I think we'll get it eventually; but it seems to come slowly."

"Do the lumber-jacks contribute?" It was Eloise's question.

"Not much. Poor devils, they can hardly make both ends meet, even if they live straight."

"By Jove! I hadn't thought of it!" exclaimed Mackenzie irrelevantly, slapping his knee with one hand. "Look here," he went on to Bream. "You were asking me yesterday what action I was going to take against that man Silver, and I said I was going to send him to jail."

"Yes."

"Well, I've changed my mind."

"Good! The spirit of charity seems to be in the air!"

The little china clock on the lambrequin-covered pine mantelpiece ticked loudly in the instant's pause, and from outside came a long rush and roar as a belated wind swept through the near-by forest.

"How much would Silver's prospective jail sentence amount to in a fine?"

Bream thought a moment. "Considering that the attack was unprovoked, I should say about fifty dollars."

"Good. Now how is this? The trial

can't come off for about six weeks, you tell me, and I may not want to spend that much time in Hampton. Besides, I don't want your man's money, anyway. What I want is his punishment. Now if Burchard & Hill will deduct fifty dollars from the cook's salary and present it to Dr. Cavanaugh for the hospital I'll call everything square."

For a moment there was silence. Then Cavanaugh spoke.

"See now, Dick," he reproached, "you've been begging for me and forced Mr. Mackenzie—"

"Not at all, doctor, not at all!" Allan rose from the old horsehair sofa in genuine protest and laid his hand on the physician's shoulder. "It's nothing I'm doing; Dan Silver's doing it. When the hospital's built he'll get his money's worth, I'll wager."

"He's had it already out of the snake-room," said Bream crisply, "and this is the least he should do. With all that, I think this is very handsome of Mr. Mackenzie."

"Oh, don't thank me!" cried Allan, turning to look at his wife. "If Eloise approves, I shall be satisfied. It's really such a little thing."

His deprecation rang true, but yet Bream, watching him, discerned in his eyes that same look of uneasy wistfulness, almost pleading, that he had seen in them during the journey down. It was as if Mackenzie sued for appreciation like a child who has anticipated commands.

Eloise, dressed in a blue-serge skirt and shirt-waist, sat in a creaky patent rocker by the red-shaded lamp. The light fell softly on her fair, broad brow and the mass of chestnut hair coiled above it. Her hazel eyes, tender, candid, sincere, were fixed gravely upon her husband, and her lips, red and enticingly full, were parted in a smile.

"I think it is a lovely thing to do, dear," she said, so gently, so lovingly, that Bream saw for a moment beneath the veil of her reserve, and glimpsed a depth of wifehood, the possibilities of which hurt him like a pain. His mind remained quiet, dazzled by its vision. "What I have forsworn," he thought, "for the sake of a miserable fortune!" Then his eyes returned to Mackenzie.

The man was radiant, and from that moment until the time when the visitors

took their leave, he seemed like one stimulated by some invisible wine, like one whose cup of joy is full.

Next day three log drives reached Hampton; Bream's, Olson & Svenson's No. 3 from a tributary of the East River, and that of Leclerc, a jobber in a second-growth pot-hole country. For miles up-stream the river was a solid carpet of brown logs that diminished to the size of toothpicks in the perspective.

As the afternoon wore on the lumberjacks from the rear drives appeared in the distance, making for town along the bank trails on either shore. Dressed in their river togs, with spots of bright color here and there, they pressed on in single file, mingling their walk with rough horse-play, gigantic laughter, Rabelaisian humor. This was the hour of freedom, of anticipation, dreamed and talked of through many a day of bitter cold and exhausting labor. The drive was in. Reward was at hand.

The little town ahead of them, quiet, busy at its work, became invested with all the glamour of romance. It was the promised land, the land of milk and honey. In it were to be found light and color and companionship, joy, adventure, indulgence, satiation.

By nightfall Hampton was full of men with money burning their pockets who moved in pairs or groups up one side of the main street and down the other. The conjunction of this road and "Paradise Alley" was at right angles, so that there was an L of constantly seething activity as the men passed alternately from the lure of vice to the more seriously attractive luxuries of the brilliantly lighted shop-windows.

And in the last moments of restraint queer twists of character manifested themselves. One man who had promised his wife a feather boa bought it immediately and tied it round his waist underneath his coat, determined that it at least should reach home safely, whatever might happen thereafter to himself. Another, taking a faro dealer aside, thrust a hundred dollars into his hand, saying: "If I ask for this to-night, Jimmy, don't give it to me no-ways, no matter what I do." And Jimmy promised, regretting sincerely that Bud wouldn't let the cards alone, but taking every cent of his roll six hours later without the flicker of an eyelash.

Bream, who had been busy at the mill all day with Dorlon and Borwell, his foremen, did not see his men until that evening as he was on his way to Mrs. Barry's. So that when he entered "Paradise Alley" a whoop of joy went up.

Bream's attitude toward the "Alley" and its supposed delights was that of one in whom a high valuation of himself was as inbred as fastidiousness in speech or thought. And yet it held no censure for those whose scheme of morals differed from his, for always he joined the festivities in their early stages, led his companions to the bar, and joined them in a single drink.

This he had made a part of his policy in keeping the ascendancy over his men. But there was no misunderstanding it, for, though he clapped many a shoulder in thunderous greeting, he saw to it that his own shoulders always escaped.

To-night he found the gang in the Grand Empire, the river-man's ideal of gilded luxury, and, in the course of half an hour's deafening comradeship, managed to pass the news of Dan Silver's enforced contribution to the hospital. As Dan's reputation was none of the best, in that he invariably had another engagement when the time approached for him to stand out before his brethren and say: "Well, what'll it be, boys?" this news produced pandemonium.

The surly cook, who had concealed his unwelcome charity at the time of paying off, was sought high and low. But he had disappeared, cut to the quick with anguish, tasting to the last drop the bitter dregs of another's revenge!

When Bream reached Mrs. Barry's it was but a little past eight and the glow of the crimson and gray twilight still lingered in the sky. Eloise, wrapped in a sweater and shawl, sat on the low veranda.

"Please, Mr. Bream, tell me what's happening to-night?" she said curiously, when the greetings were over.

"The boys have just begun to take this town apart, piece by piece," he replied. "All wise persons are indoors. Not five minutes ago I saw an estimable gentleman shaken by his heels while coins rained out of his pockets. He'll get them all back, of course, but he will realize that temptation is abroad."

"And Allan is out somewhere!" she said with a note of concern. "Do you think anything will happen to him?"

Bream's face, which had grown grave for a moment, relaxed. "No, I don't think so," he replied. "I had forgotten for a moment that he still wears his bandages. He'll be safe. The boys aren't cruel; they're only out for fun. And then besides"—he chuckled—"I think Mr. Mackenzie will be quite a hero. Any one who can force Dan Silver into philanthropy will command instant respect." And he told her of his experience in the Grand Empire.

She laughed. "All the same, I shall be relieved when Allan comes in. When there is any excitement going on he is a regular boy. He likes to be out on election nights and go to fairs and see parades. He says it does him good to rub up against his fellow man." She laughed again. "But I must confess I don't like crowds."

"Nor I," he confessed, as they went inside to the living-room. When she was seated he pulled a book from his pocket.

"Here is something I thought might help you pass the time while you are in Hampton," he said, handing it to her. "It's one of a dozen I ordered from Toronto and that came in my absence."

"A book!" she cried, flushing with pleasure. "How lovely, Mr. Bream! And Kipling, too! You can't imagine how I shall enjoy it. It seems years since I have read anything!" She held the volume with caressing hands, examining the scarlet leather binding and opening it to pages here and there.

A flood of warmth surged over him.

"Well, I haven't much of a home," he said, laughing, "but I try to keep up the illusion of one by getting some of the new books every six months. I hate to lose touch with everything civilized."

"A home!" she cried wistfully, letting the book fall in her lap, while her eyes seemed to brood upon some inner vision. "Even your illusion of it can seem so wonderful to one who has not even that!"

"But surely you have some place—"

He hesitated, despite the impulse that urged him on. His mental concept of her life had always pictured her as the chateleine of some exquisite abode, her personality at its best amid surroundings of refinement and taste.

"Well, not really." She had changed on the instant. Her laugh was almost gay. "You see, Allan's business is so much a matter of circumstance that we cannot

settle down anywhere for very long. That is the only reason I sometimes sigh for a place I can call my own. But then, that isn't often. I love the moving about. I don't know what I should do if we left the trail forever."

He acquiesced in her mood. "Allan's business!" he cried scornfully. "I don't believe he has any. He just travels about in state at his pleasure, like the famous Sir George Simpson!"

"Oh, but no!" she cried. "Allan is always doing something. He is quite the despair of my life because he's a Jack of all trades and master in several. It is the *wanderlust* that keeps him on the move. As soon as he got his degrees in science from McGill he started forth, and as a result has geologized and prospected and mined and farmed and traded pretty well over the whole of Canada. When we met you, for instance, we had been north all winter in the silver country, assaying for a syndicate. And the spring and summer before that in Alberta, experimenting with soils to help the Doukhobar farmers."

"Ah, yes"—she smiled and shrugged with an inexpressibly graceful movement—"we're sort of gipsies of the wild. But let's not talk about it any more. Think of the months of wilderness we have to the one night when we can tear Kipling to tatters with impunity!" She took up the book again and ran hastily through it. "And, speaking of Kipling, I can never see a northwest mounted police barracks without thinking of *Danny Deever*; actually my blood runs cold."

"And I can never see a windy night on Basque Lake and the company steamer plowing home through it that I don't think of the Bolivar—'trailing like a wounded duck, working out her soul.' That makes my blood run warm!"

They both laughed. Outside the wind roared spasmodically through the near-by forest, and upon it, rising and falling with the gusts, sounded the din from "Paradise Alley," a murmured babel, punctuated occasionally with spasms of unusual tumult. Bream could picture it all—the garish yellow light from the saloon windows, the crowded, smoke-filled bars, the deep-chested shouts and laughter, the wolf-howl of delight as men locked in frenzied combat.

For an instant he listened. Then, doubly appreciative of the atmosphere in which

he found himself, he picked up the thread of his conversation with Eloise and eagerly, hungrily, like children greedy of a new sweet, they set upon their simple intellectual feast.

Bream went home that night stimulated, nervous, strangely excited by the unusual exercise of mind and emotions. His brain raced, mulling over and over arguments and phrases that he had said or might have said. He longed to resume the friendly, interesting discussion and extend it to other fields wherein he knew they stood on common ground.

Eloise sat until eleven reading the book that Bream had brought her. Then, as steps sounded on the veranda, she looked up expectantly. A moment later her husband entered.

"Oh, hello, darling!" he cried, as he saw her in the living-room. "Didn't expect to find you up. By George, I've seen sights to-night that beat anything in the world! Too bad you couldn't go along, but that's a little too strong for me, even. I hope Bream was over for a while, so you weren't alone all the evening."

"Yes, he was here and brought me this new Kipling book. I'm simply devouring it!"

His eyes twinkled. "Jolly good of him!" He took the volume. "A book, eh? And with red covers! Well, well. But, Ellie, I've got a book in my pocket with yellow covers that's a jolly lot more interesting!" His hand disappeared into the side of his coat and came out holding a thick package of yellow-back bills bound tightly with a rubber strap. "Read that and get happy!" he cried, and tossed it into her lap.

The smile died from her face as she picked up the bundle, examining it almost with revulsion. "How did you get all this?" she asked presently, laying the money on the center-table.

"Got it at roulette; there's about thirteen hundred," he answered. The jubilation had gone from his voice, and recovering the bills, he dropped them carelessly into his coat-pocket with an almost defiant expression.

"We've got to live, you know, Ellie, until we connect with the bank." His tone was almost harsh.

"Of course, Allan." In her reply was patience, sweetness of temper, the softness that turneth away wrath; and yet, too,

something more, an intangible condemnation that stood between them like a stone wall. She rose and secured her Kipling. "Shall we go up now?"

With an inexplicable grimace he stood aside to let her pass.

CHAPTER V

THE WOLF LEAPS

BREAM now took hold of the work at the mill with an energy that bade fair to complete it in record time. The principal task was the sorting of the intermingled logs that had composed the three drives: This was accomplished by a comparatively small number of lumber-jacks (those who had resisted or not entirely succumbed to dissipation), assisted by "high-bankers," or men who worked regularly at the mill. All day long the brown carpet that filled the stream from bank to bank crept forward, and all day the men leaped and rode and heaved at the crumbling edges, diverting each log into its rightful boom.

Bream himself was chiefly occupied with tally-book and pencil, for as the scalers measured the Burchard & Hill timber he jotted down their figures and totaled them, his object being to tally with the scaling already done on the skidways the winter before and to determine the loss, if any, during the drive.

The clear, sunny spring days, with their suggestion of mounting vitality, spurred on the work, and Hampton seethed with activity. With the shouts of the men in the booms sounded the metallic, snarling song of the saws, the whirl and clang of machinery, and the roar of steam. A pungent smell of sawdust mingled with the softer odors from the forest and acrid wood-smoke from the tall iron chimneys.

During this time Bream saw a good deal of Allan Mackenzie. Never obtrusive, but always about, the convalescent exhibited deep interest in the manifold activities at the mill. At odd times, when for some reason there was a momentary lull, he would chat briefly with the boss or with Hill, whom he had met, asking questions that betrayed an intelligent knowledge of the work. Or he would sit on a pile of sawdust with the men during the dinner-hour, overcoming their natural reserve with an easy familiarity.

One morning, when Bream reached the

mill, he found Tom Hill's fourteen-year-old boy waiting for him.

"Here's a letter pop ast me to give ye," said the lank, freckled urchin, extending a folded sheet of paper. "It's my writin' but he tol' me what to say, an' lammed me every time I crabbed the spellin'."

Bream, with the note in his hand, watched, amused, as the boy disappeared down the street, fish-pole over shoulder. Then he remembered that it was Saturday, and a whimsical longing took him that he might be, himself, once more a boy of the fish-pole age. At the thought old, forgotten scenes leaped before his eyes, old shouts rang in his ears, and the poignant scents of other springs crept into his nostrils. He seemed to span in a moment the years since then, and he wondered, with a little panic, if he were growing old. "Youth, youth!" he thought vaguely. "Am I killing it with work up here? Am I to miss youth as some children miss childhood?"

The raucous mill whistle brought him back to reality. "What bosh is this I'm thinking?" he demanded of himself disgustedly, and opened the paper in his hand to read:

DEER BREAM:

Have went to our Randall mill on Oseko to meet Burchard. Be gone about a week. Look after things till I come back we will plan about next year then.

TOM HILL.

For a minute Bream stood quiet, surprised by this unexpected step and the responsibility so suddenly thrust upon him.

Then he began the few necessary arrangements to inaugurate the new régime. He turned his tally-book and scaler's record over to Dorlon, one of his foremen, and posted Hill's letter, with an additional notice of his own, on the mill bulletin-board, where all the hands could see it. Finally he mounted the stairs to the dingy little office and took up the multitudinous duties that immediately presented themselves.

It was nearly ten o'clock before he had a breathing space and could ponder on the situation that confronted him. He knew, without question, what had taken Hill to Randall—the purchase of the stumpage in the Y. To Bream's quick mind that line, "we will plan about next year," confessed it. From his knowledge of Hill he deduced

that this unexpected move was the result of two causes; the first a desire to steal a swift march on any possible rivals, and the second his own impatience of delay when so much lay at stake.

For Hill, so far so good, Bream thought, but what about himself, his own plans? Either he must act quickly and to some purpose, or the opportunity that had opened before him would be gone. Already he had made his plans in harmony with the usual program at this time of year. Burchard was not expected on his annual visit for another ten days, and in half that time the checking would have been finished, leaving him to his own devices. The remaining five days he would devote to attempting to raise the money for the purchase of the coveted Y. Failing in this, he would resort to the Sawpits bank loan.

But now, caught off his balance, unprepared, what should he do? Give up his dream without a struggle? Condemn himself to a life of employment here or of starving anew somewhere else?

The hot blood rose darkly under his tan at the thought. His eyes flashed and his mouth drew into a grim, determined line as he swiftly made his decision. "I'll do it somehow," he muttered, as he had on the day of his arrival with the Mackenzies.

His next thought concerned his position with the firm. As things stood now, he was morally certain of Hill's intention regarding the Y timber. On the other hand, Hill was unaware of his own. Clearly that was Hill's misfortune, yet at the same time Bream would not operate secretly against his employer, even in a matter of buying public timber land. He reached for paper and a pen that lay before him on the desk and wrote out two copies of his resignation. One of these he addressed to Burchard & Hill at Randall and sent immediately to the post-office. The other he posted on the bulletin-board down-stairs alongside the order that had elevated him but three hours before.

When the storm of surprise and protest from his men had passed somewhat, he explained his action to some degree, saying that an important and unexpected event had occurred which would take him out of town for a few days. In answer to their queries he assured them that he would come back, that he expected to see them all again shortly. Meanwhile he would re-

main in his present position until the mill closed that night.

He performed this last act loyally, principally because he was at a loss for the moment how to proceed. The problem of raising money faced him with the grinning emptiness of a skull.

By Hill's sudden move he had been thrust without alternative upon the course of floating the loan from the bank, a course which, no less now than before, he was reluctant to take. With swift calculation he counted the hours still at his command. Thirty-six! The company steamer did not leave again until Monday morning, and the obscure railroad could not take him to Sawpits. With so much grace he would still be abreast of the departed Hill, for the latter, traveling by Saturday morning boat, railroad, and "cadge" wagon, could not reach Randall until Sunday night, and from there, in case of swift action, the distance to Toronto was equal to Hampton's from the same city.

He still had time, Bream told himself, pounding the arm of his chair gently, and he must contrive some other financial arrangement, some deal that did not place him between two mill-stones—the bank and the monopoly.

A knock on the office door aroused him and he called a summons to enter. The knob turned and Allan Mackenzie peered round the jamb. A moment later he advanced, smiling, into the room. His face was still swathed in bandages, but the real danger to the fracture was past, so that now he had a cigar between his teeth.

"By Jove! Master of the mill!" he said, offering a weed to Bream.

"For three hours, yes, but now no longer. Didn't you see my resignation down-stairs?"

"Come, come, man, quit ragging me!" Mackenzie sat down in the chair near the desk and regarded Bream amusedly.

The two were on excellent terms. Always congenial, and seeing much of each other lately, they had passed the first formal stages of friendship and had entered on a mutually welcome intimacy. Now, as always, Bream responded to Mackenzie's unflinching good nature.

"It's no ragging, I assure you!" he said, laughing. "I'm out of it here."

"Have a row with that beastly animal, Hill? Wouldn't blame you a bit."

"No; something worse than that. The

truth is, Allan, I'm in a devil of a fix, and because I don't know where to turn, I'm going to ask your advice. Can you listen to my uninteresting affairs?"

"Lucky dog to have any affairs! Go on."

Without delay Bream complied. He began at the beginning and traced his business career from the first day he had entered his father's office as a clerk up to and including his interview with Hill on the day he had brought the Mackenzies down. He explained his ambition and outlined the timber situation in the Oseko, showing Mackenzie on the faded map the strategically located Y and the expanse of virgin forest that it controlled.

"With ten years' more cutting before them, Burchard & Hill want to buy that fifteen million feet," he said bitterly, "and practically bottle up the district forever. They don't need it, and I do. I've got to have it."

"Then where's your difficulty? Buy it."

"I can't, unless I can somehow raise twenty or thirty thousand dollars. I have only half the money I need." And he explained his present financial situation.

During the recital Mackenzie had slumped down in his chair, his legs thrust straight out before him, his hands in his pockets, his dead cigar twitching between his teeth. Apparently lost in thought, his heavy lids had dropped down over his eyes, giving him unconsciously an inscrutable, calculating expression.

When Bream had finished his narrative Mackenzie remained for some time without speaking. Then he slowly drew his knees up and crossed them.

"You're pretty well had, I'll admit," he said slowly, and paused. "But there must be a way out, there's *got* to be a way out!" He mouthed his cigar, staring at the floor.

"And the Sawpits bank?" asked Bream anxiously. "Would you float that loan?"

Mackenzie shook his head slowly. "Not if I could get the money any other way. How much time have you?"

"Till Monday morning's steamer."

Again Mackenzie shook his head. Then he rose. "Let me think this over, Dick," he said. "I've seen these things done before, and I ought to find a way out. Give me a little time. I want to help you if I can."

"By George, if you do, I'll never forget it!"

"Nonsense, Dick. You did me a good turn. Come over to the house to-night. Eloise has been asking about you." He opened the door.

"I'll be there," said Bream, laughing, and Mackenzie, with a wave of his hand, went out.

CHAPTER VI

THE FOX CONTRIVES

ALLAN descended the stairs slowly and crossed the sawdust street, greeting two or three men who were hanging about the team entrance to the mill. Then, lost in thought, he walked slowly along the calk-pitted sidewalk, slapping his knee mechanically with a green switch he carried. Dirty children playing under foot laughed up at him as he passed, drawn by something in him to which all sentient things responded, and their slatternly mothers, standing in the unkempt front yards, smiled at the "fine, handsome feller what had his jaw broke."

But for once Mackenzie's cheery answering word and smile were lacking in response; concentrated consideration of Bream's problem made him oblivious to his surroundings.

Ten minutes' walk along the main road took him out of town and into the quiet of the forest, where, presently finding a fallen log, he sat down to think. So deep was his thought that he remained almost motionless, staring at the leaf-mold between his feet. At the end of an hour he rose with a briskness that implied inspiration or decision and took his way toward Mrs. Barry's.

He found Eloise seated by the window up-stairs, thimble on finger, overhauling their outfit. He gently kissed the cheek she offered him and then walked almost nervously about the room, filling his pipe.

"Why such diligence, dear?" he inquired presently.

"Only the usual mend, Allan. I never know when you will want to move on. We've been here ten days already, and that's a long while for us." She snipped her heavy brown thread and shifted the skirt that lay across her knee. He continued to walk aimlessly about, pretending to inspect the colored chromos that hung on the flimsy walls. Presently she asked: "Have you any plans, Allan?"

"Now that you mention it," he replied casually, "something has occurred to me."

She let her hands fall into her lap and looked up at him. "You expect to stay on here, then?"

"Yes. For a while at least."

That sudden dropping of her hands, a motion listless and a little hopeless, was not lost upon him. He was prepared for the alarmed, almost suspicious intonation of her voice as she asked:

"Why? What are you going to do? Surely there's nothing here you want!"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I think it will be advantageous for us to stay, that's all. I think I can make some money here." He met her gaze almost defiantly as he sank uneasily into a chair opposite to her.

A slow chill of misery crept into her blood and spread through her body. This thing that she had come to dread as youth dreads death, had stirred and was about to enter her life again.

"Oh, Allan!" It was a cry of pleading, born of the sorrows he had heaped upon her in the past.

"Good, honest money, from a good, honest investment," he declared, and spoke with conscious pride.

Apparently oblivious to his words, she flung the skirt from her lap and sprang up, her clenched fists crushed to her burning cheeks. Tears were in her eyes.

"Again!" she cried. "Must we go through it again! But it's always the same! Honest money! Not a dollar of it have you ever made! Somebody's always suffers! Always!"

"Dearest!" His voice was gentle. "Won't you believe me? I swear that this is genuine! It's a matter of my own money entirely."

"Oh, how many times have I heard you swear and seen you break your word! It was the same with those poor Russian farmers in Alberta and your worthless soil improvements, and it was the same with that salted mine last winter. You have—have lied—yes, there is no other word—lied to me so often before that why should I believe you now?" She turned from him and stood looking through the window with unseeing eyes.

"Please, dearest!" There was hurt in his tones. "I can't seem to make you understand. Those things had to do with other people's money; this has to do with my own."

"What money of yours do you refer to?"

He laughed a little sheepishly. "The only real money I've got. My legacy. It's escaped so far, owing to my luck the other night, but now it's time has come."

His words arrested her, and she considered. Perhaps, after all, he was telling the truth. Surely he would not foolishly risk the sum that, in hard times, was their only bulwark against the world. "Is your own money all that goes into this—this venture?" she asked.

"No," he told her frankly, "but it's a square deal either way. We stand to win or lose together."

"We? Whom do you mean?"

"Bream and I. Hard to believe, isn't it, but he was really responsible. He was in a tight place financially—matter of life and death with him—and he came to me for advice. I held him off till I could think, and if he's to be got out of the hole, this is the only way. I want to help him if I can. He did us a good turn that day on the river—"

"Oh, Allan! Not he!" Her eyes shone and her voice was deep with reproach. "Do you realize that we haven't a better friend in the world than Mr. Bream? He likes us, likes us both; you for what you can be, and me, well, for the life I had once."

"Before you married me!" he exclaimed with calm bitterness, a spasm of pain contracting his pale face. "God knows I wish now, for your sake, that I hadn't done it! But then—I couldn't let you go! All my life you are the only human being I have ever loved."

"Please, please!" she begged him.

He sighed during a moment's pause. "Now this thing about Dick," he went on, almost with an effort. "Let me explain it to you."

He repeated in detail what Bream had told him in regard to the financial and logging situation.

"He has twenty thousand, and my legacy's twenty-seven. I'll throw in any or all of it, as he prefers," he concluded with a wave of his hand. "I am firmly convinced that the purchase of that timber in the Y will make our fortunes, and make them honestly!"

Eloise, who through the long narration had gradually regained her composure, remained silent after this faintly grandilo-

quent conclusion—silent and unconvinced. She knew her husband thoroughly; every note of his voice, every gesture of his expressive hands, every turn of his mind. She had listened to similar protestations many times before in their three years of married life, and each time they had proven false.

For somewhere, in some unsuspected cranny of each proposition, had been tucked away a joker that, to her, placed the deal outside the pale of honor, though within the letter of the law. Was there one in this case? If so, what was it?

She looked at her husband. He was smiling at her affectionately, his eyes mirroring that intense love, almost worship, that was at once the greatest contradiction and the only genuine emotion of his nature. The anomaly of it struck home to her again as it had done a thousand times before. That he could love her so and yet make her so constantly unhappy!

"Allan," she said in a low voice, "there is something else, a loophole somewhere; there always is. I feel it, I know it! You will do as you have done before. You can't help it."

She paused, but he made no reply. Then she leaned toward him, twisting her hands together and fixing him with a look of intense supplication.

"Oh, don't do it, this time! Please, this once! *Let's go away!* I'll pack up. See, everything is here! I'll do it quickly and we can go to-day. You are well enough now. We'll go south, as you thought at first! Oh"—her voice trembled—"don't you see what this has meant to me? Just for once to have had friends like other people? To have lived ten days without their beginning to suspect?" She broke off abruptly.

He shrugged almost indifferently.

"If there is a loophole, as you suggest," he said, "I haven't discovered it yet. The point is that unless Bream finds a way out of his difficulty in thirty-six hours, his chance of a lifetime will be gone. I like Dick better than any man I've ever met, and I intend to give him that chance. He's coming here to-night, and I think that he and I will enter into partnership. That's my final decision, Eloise."

He calmly picked up a scientific work on lumbering that Bream had lent him and began to read.

She remained silent, realizing the hope-

lessness of argument, chilled with doubt, and trembling for her brief happiness. Was Allan sincere for once? Was it his idea to help Bream freely and generously—Bream who, these ten days, had brought into her life more of the things she longed for than any one since her marriage?

After five minutes she glanced at Mackenzie. He was reading placidly, smoking his pipe, interested, for the moment a picture of domesticity.

Suddenly the old fear reasserted itself. Knowing him so well, she began to doubt.

Was it natural for him (under any circumstances) to prop up a tottering scheme with his little fortune unless he could see the end as clearly as the beginning? She knew it was not, for, though he spent what he made like water, he never risked it except at the gaming-table. And yet he had spoken of Bream and himself winning or losing together!

The circumstances of the deal seemed scarcely to bear this out. Bream was in a position where he would accept almost any terms rather than resort to the bank for his loan. Mackenzie, who was notoriously cold-blooded in deals of this kind, was all anxiety to leap to the rescue. Could it be friendship for Bream that prompted this? Decidedly not; despite his assertion to the contrary!

Her heart contracted as the certainty came home that her husband had deceived her again. Bream might lose, but she knew Allan would not. The conviction grew momentarily stronger that there was indeed a loophole, as she had suspected; that somewhere back in her husband's clever brain the exception, the evasion, lay germinating toward its evil fruit.

Her head drooped with despair and disappointment as she sat down opposite him and took up the skirt she had been mending.

Bream severed his connection with Burchard & Hill that night in a mood of thankfulness for release that contained very little sentimental attachment to past associations. Mackenzie's unexpected desire to help him in his difficulty had raised eleventh-hour hopes, and he felt that buoyant courage that comes with the throwing off of long-endured fetters. Mind, body, and soul, each at last its own master, longed for the fight ahead, the battle with circumstance, nature, and humanity that

would decide, one way or the other, the matter of his survival among the Titans of his world. In this mood he arrived at Mrs. Barry's after dinner.

Eloise wore the one pretentious dress of her slender wardrobe, a dark-blue cloth affair, lightened at neck, waist, and wrists with touches of dull-red velvet, and having black braid on the front. The donning of it had been to Allan a sign of returning spirits; to her it was a bitterly whimsical decking forth for the sacrifice of her one friendship. Her chestnut hair, heavy and abundant, was coiled about her head; a shadowy mass that lightened the clear pallor of her skin. Her lips lacked some of their color, and her eyes did not smile with them in greeting.

Because of the unusual warmth of the night, the three sat on the low porch and watched the slow metamorphosis of a distant reach of the lake from pearl to opal and, at last, to polished steel. But Allan, easy and talkative, the experienced host, did not wait long before bringing the important subject forward.

"I hope you won't mind, Dick," he said, "because I have talked the matter of your business over with Eloise. There was a certain point about which I wished to consult her."

"Of course not. I only hope the consultation was a success." Bream turned to the girl, smiling, but she seemed not to have heard. Her face, proud and pale, was turned toward the distant sunset and tinged with its rosy color. She seemed lost in the contemplation of some far vision.

"It was," said Allan, with a dryness that was lost on Bream, "and this is the result of it: I want to go in on that lumber deal with you myself."

"You! By George, Allan, if you could!" Dick leaned forward eagerly for a moment and then relaxed into his seat again. "But you're just 'ragging,' as you call it! You can't, you—"

"Now just a minute," broke in Mackenzie. "I *can*. I've an aunt's legacy of something like twenty-seven thousand dollars lying idle in the Bank of Canada at Montreal, and I've been looking for a good chance to invest it. I think I've found that chance. But let me make myself clear. I'm doing this because I expect to make money; that is my first consideration. Consequently you can see how much

faith I am putting in you and your descriptions of the land you want to buy. I accept them unreservedly."

"Thank you," said Bream; "I appreciate that tremendously. Any man is a fool who buys timber without first seeing it himself, and your faith in me is the sincerest compliment of my life. But I wonder if my needs in the matter are quite clear. It isn't only money I want, you know, but a partner, a man who will go into the woods with me and follow every detail of the business, suggesting and helping and checking me if necessary."

"Yes, I understand that."

Bream's forehead wrinkled with puzzlement. "B-but I thought you couldn't stay here in Hampton, that you had business farther south."

Mackenzie drew several cigars from his pocket and offered one to Bream. Then he cut the end off another with his knife, and presently lighted both of them deliberately. The ceremony consumed a few minutes, during which there was silence between them. Now the light on the distant vista of the lake had faded and the sky was dark, except for a yellow glow that rose above "Paradise Alley." The shouts and tumult of Saturday night revelry came to them plainly through the still night air.

"I had intended to go on from here," said Mackenzie seriously, "but, thinking the matter over this afternoon, I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing I cannot arrange almost as well by wire or mail. That feature of it need give you no concern."

"By George, how lucky!" cried Bream, relieved. "Then we can get to business at once. We haven't much time, you know."

"Exactly. I've thought of that, and here's my idea of the quickest way to push things through. If I can get to Sawpits some time to-morrow, I can connect with an afternoon express south on the Canadian Central that will land me at Celta Junction in the evening. From there I can catch another train directly across to Montreal, arriving Monday morning. I'll draw the money as soon as the bank opens and come back to Toronto on the first convenient train. However, I'm afraid that this will delay me too late to buy the land Monday, but I'll get it the first thing Tuesday and return here as soon as possible."

Bream pondered for a few moments. "I guess that's the best you can do," he said at last. "Now about getting to Sawpits." He paused. "Look here, are you good for a day's paddling?"

"Oh, yes. I've done many of them."

"Then if we start from here by canoe at sunrise to-morrow we should be able to connect with that train at Sawpits, providing this weather holds."

"Good! I hadn't thought of that! It solves the problem. And, by the way, what do you think about Burchard, Dick? Could he reach Toronto ahead of me?"

"He might if he started from Randall almost as soon as Hill arrived there. But I don't think he will. In the first place, Randall is farther from the railroad than we are, and, furthermore, it would mean night travel in a canoe for him, and he is pretty old for that. I don't think we need worry."

For a time they smoked in silence. Eloise, a dark blot in the shadow, drew her wrap more closely about her as the night coolness increased. Finally Mackenzie shifted his position and cleared his throat.

"If we're going into this thing, Dick," he said, "it seems to me we might as well go into it right."

"Yes, of course."

"So I've asked Dave Sturgis, the justice of the peace, to come over and make legal a set of partnership papers I've drawn up. Is that satisfactory?"

"Perfectly," said Bream. Then, a moment later, he laughed. "Do you realize, Allan," he asked in a tone that was half apology, half amazement, "that I don't know the first thing about you—who you are or where you came from or anything at all?"

Mackenzie, amused in turn, chuckled comfortably. "I'd never thought of it," he said, "but it's true. Now if the professor will kindly turn on the tremolo, I will tell the story of my life." He continued to chuckle as he relighted his cigar.

"Well," he resumed, "come right down to it, and there's not much to tell. I belong to the family of Mackenzies that has made history in Canada, the line that has the northern river named after it, and my home, until after I was grown, was Montreal. My parents are still living there. When I had gone through McGill University for a couple of scientific degrees I

couldn't stand it any more and broke away from all the folderol I'd been brought up to. Truth is, I've been a wanderer by instinct all my life, and I suppose I'll never be anything else. I'm one of the queer crowd that likes to accompany the first wave of civilization into wild places. I like to try new experiments and have unusual experiences. I loathe the atmosphere of proper society life.

"I'm a poor man now, though I've made money at times. Fact is, I haven't sense enough to hang on to the stuff, and that's one reason I want to get my legacy into this lumber venture. I think it's safe and sound and will keep my money better than I could." He paused as though pondering. "That's about all there is to know, Dick," he concluded.

"It's plenty," said Bream.

"Thanks. From what you have told Eloise and me of yourself I can say the same. In the matter of pedigree I gather that we are about equally guaranteed as partners. From the business standpoint each of us will have to take the other on faith, trusting that he will work his everlasting head off to save his little capital. I couldn't imagine a better basis of partnership, could you?"

"No, I could not," laughed Bream. "We don't really need the papers with that spur in our sides."

"No, but it's better so, and if I'm not much mistaken that's Sturgis coming along the walk now." Mackenzie stood up and walked to the edge of the porch.

At the same instant Eloise rose, shivering in the real summer warmth of the night, and walked toward the door.

"I hope you will excuse me," she said, holding out an icy hand to Bream. "I feel so wretchedly I can hardly hold my head up."

"I'm sorry!" he cried regretfully. "Our everlasting business has made us very rude to you to-night. You haven't had a chance to say a word, and now you're going in!"

"Oh, my remarks could not possibly have carried any weight," she replied deprecatingly as she left them.

The newcomer clumping along the sidewalk proved to be Dave Sturgis, as Allan had surmised, a dry, philosophical, little man, who was much impressed with the honor of his office.

"Wal, gents," he said familiarly, "you're on the porch for the last time in

one spell. This warm weather'll turn loose every fly an' skeet in creation."

Presently the three went inside and proceeded to business. When read, the partnership papers appeared simple, providing that each man should put in an equal sum of money—twenty thousand dollars—and that all property, both land and equipment, should be held in equal amount by each partner. It further was provided that neither member of the firm should make any important move without consulting the other, and that in matters concerning the practical side of the business Bream should have the final authority.

When all was settled, Mr. and Mrs. Barry were called in from the kitchen and witnessed the signatures, without knowing the exact import of the documents. Before he left, the justice gave assurance of secrecy in the matter for a week.

When he had gone Allan turned to Bream.

"You're sure that the five thousand apiece I provided for equipment is enough, Dick?" he asked.

"For this year, yes. I'm positive of it. If we deliver the goods the first season, we can spread out the next. It's the future beyond that Y that matters, not so much the Y itself and its fifteen million feet. The hundreds of millions that we will control are the game to play for. There's our stake, Allan, and it's a thundering good, big stake!"

"It is at that!" assented Mackenzie, with proper enthusiasm.

CHAPTER VII

"THE DAY THAT YOU REMEMBER"

By Tuesday night of the next week Dr. Cavanaugh considered that he might go fishing with a clear conscience Wednesday. After Saturday night's revelry but one man remained in the snake-room, and Marty—he who lacked a surname, but was of mighty prowess notwithstanding—had confided to his chief that "th' mutt would be out in a day or so, lookin' like a cinder, but able to birl white wather yet, b' Jove!"

Consequently the relieved disciple of Izaak Walton laid his plans. First, he summoned Tommy Hill, the mill-owner's son, and instructed him concerning the time and place, agreeing to take all re-

sponsibility for the truancy the adventure involved. Then, in fulfilment of a promise made previously, he called at Mrs. Barry's to ask the company of the Mackenzies. He was disappointed to find Eloise husbandless.

"Yes, Allan is in Toronto on business to-day," she told him. "He has been gone since Sunday. I'm so sorry. I've looked forward often to the time when you would take us fishing!"

"Then, my dear, fishing you go!" cried he, burning with that zeal peculiar to heroes of the rod. "I've been so busy with my week-end crop up at the house that I didn't know your husband had even thought of leaving Hampton. But that needn't make the slightest difference."

"Some other time will do just as well," pleaded the girl, laughing.

The eagle-eyed, white-crested old man eyed her sternly, "My dear, you don't know what you say! There can be no other time like this! I'm to have Tommy Hill in my canoe, the greatest trout finder in the county. Why, that boy can smell trout when he passes over 'em in the water! Another time he may not go, for he gets a hiding if he's caught, so to-morrow stands by itself for fishing chances! Now for some one to paddle you. If I could only get Dick! He's such good company—but I suppose he is busy at the mill."

"No," said Eloise; "he is not. He resigned last Saturday. It would be jolly if he could go along!"

"Thunder! how things happen in this town!" barked Cavanaugh. "I hadn't heard of that! But I'll look him up right away." He stepped back off the porch. "And I'll let you know as soon as I can. You must bring your lunch, of course."

"And I'll bring Mr. Bream's," she added. "Men are so messy and fussy about such things. Tell him, will you?"

"Yes. It'll be one of my inducements."

"That was hardly gallant," she cried after him as he hurried away.

He waved his hands helplessly. Half an hour later he returned. "It's all right," he said. "Dick was going off by himself, anyway, so I roped him in for you."

"Unhappy fisherman!" she cried.

"But most fortunate of mortals!" he retorted, at more leisure to accept her challenge.

What is the essence of youth but the

refinement of anticipation? Your ninety-year cub (and there are many nowadays) lives in a state of mental and spiritual expectation—looking forward to the pleasurable unforeseen. Your aged dolt of fifty, seeing his natural force abate, believes that he has run the gamut and that life holds forth no interest but the observation of his own decline.

Anticipation! Flavor it with a sprig of freedom, a pinch of daring, and one unpeeled triumph; mix well, and we have the mood of one Dick Bream as, rod over shoulder, he sets forth to the enjoyment of his last untrammelled day.

Behold, then, the embarkation. A bulging, string-tied shoe-box, the rods, and a nest of blankets are the only duffel in the canoe; there is a lake before, blue as the aura of genius and sparkling like rare conversation, a friendly sun behind, making into crystal the pine pure air; there is laughter and banter and much prophecy of the day's events and a round wager that hangs upon the verdict of the scales.

There is a mood in things that makes music of the crisping paddle-dip and poetry of the leap of the canoe; that discovers white-fleshed dryads lurking among the silver birches of the water's edge, and imagines gnomes in the deep-hidden forest hollows. Youth! The miracle of it is everywhere except—

Eloise, kneeling in the bow, responded to Dick's banter with laughing lips; but her eyes were bleak, like the soul within her. The bells that celebrated his triumphant partnership rang cracked and hollow in her ears. The light of undefeated, eager youth that glowed in his face blinded her when she looked upon it and made her cringe. In imagination she could see the succeeding tragedy of disillusion blotting out that light like some spreading plague-spot. Was this, then, to her all of youth, this ghastly watching of the approach to the chasm? The treachery of her position caused her to rebel against God for the way things stood, for she was young, although her heart was wise in sorrow.

But Dick laughed. He sang; he was overflowing with a prodigal fellowship. His immense vitality drew in the sun and sent it out again in shimmering waves of boyish attraction. Slowly they closed about her icy heart until it stirred and softened toward him with a moist-eyed gratitude for the gifts of soul.

And presently, after they had met the others at a secluded spot and Bream had laid authority upon her with delicious daring, her bleak eyes melted to the frank warmth of his laughing ones, and she thought: "God help me! Can I refuse him because my own heart is bitter? It is his day; let him remember it forever!" And through her mind ran Swinburne's lines:

The day that you remember,
The day that I forget.

"I wonder will I forget?" she asked herself.

Then she settled down in the nest of blankets, facing him (this was his command), and played at passenger while he brayed ridiculous lumberman's chanteys to the sky, until Dr. Cavanaugh growled that he would scare the fish to Fundy.

Now they had turned up Shadow River, a glassy, tortuous stream that emptied into Basque Lake at Rabbit Bay. Once, to the right, they passed the tangled, brush-constructed home of a beaver colony. Mossy logs and stumps rose from the water at grotesque angles, sheltering fleets of lily-pads; black, blasted pines with reddish needles leaned perilously out from either bank and housed flocks of quarreling crows or a blue, white-ringed fish-hawk. On both sides massed the forest hosts in Lincoln green, their banner a luminous strip of blue sky. And everywhere was silence except for the sounds of the creatures that God put there—fluting robins, jays that screamed and fought among the tree-tops, twittering king-birds, wrangling swallows, mellow warblers and thrushes, impudent crows, and saucy squirrels.

The air was fragrant, for the balsam was beginning to smell, and occasionally the penetrating fresh-water odor of the river swept down in cool, damp breaths.

At the foot of a little falls that foamed and chattered in the stillness the doctor held up an impressive hand. His eye was bright, almost fevered, his whole being tense. The great moment was at hand.

"Tommy says here!" he cried. "You folks take one side and we'll take the other."

So they fished. And never had Tommy sensed the trout so well. Gamy, silver-speckled fellows and their larger brethren of the salmon strain, ravenous after the winter, rose to the flies with joyous regu-

larity. And Eloise, rubber-booted in the shallows, whipped her line back and forth with the best of them, so that her string outnumbered both Bream's and the doctor's. But not the boy's; for he, as Cavanaugh said, seemed to "smell them out" and to drop his fly with uncanny success before their silly, bulging eyes.

Then came the hour when the sun was overhead and the blue camp-fire smoke drifted sidewise across the tapestry of the forest, bearing with it the mingled aromas of pine and coffee and broiling fish—a very treasure of an hour made torment by appetite. And, afterward, that blissful half-hour when, warmed and fed, man offers the incense of the weed in thanks to the powers that be. Half an hour—no longer—and the Compleat Angler will be stirring. So stirred Cavanaugh, for, said he, they must portage around the falls into the upper stream. But Dick lay stubbornly on his back, his pipe between his teeth.

"Go on with your murdering if you like, doc," he said, with a great air of disapproval. "I've slain enough of God's creatures for one day."

"And eaten enough of them, too," rejoined Eloise, sniffing, for they had dared each other to mighty feats, and she had lost. "Don't look so virtuous."

"But I *feel* so virtuous," he complained. "I could lie here all day contemplating my qualities."

"That isn't virtue; it's food," she told him. "What is to become of me under these extraordinary circumstances?"

He pulled a book out of a water-proof side pocket and handed it to her. "You may read to me," he condescended. "I've dog-eared the page at my place."

For a minute she endeavored to be stern. Then his merry, twinkling smile conquered her. "Oh dear, I suppose I shall have to," she wailed. "I can't resist Jack London even to discipline you!"

The doctor, whose scorn for Bream's desertion demanded revenge, now sought it. "You might read to yourself, Mrs. Mackenzie," he suggested. "Then what would the lazy animal do?"

"Oh, good! I hadn't thought of that!" She clasped the book between her hands, hugged it to her breast, and danced around the glowing embers of the fire. Bream observed her for a moment with a complacent, almost idiotic smile. Then he reached

into another pocket and produced a second volume.

"Read on, Mackenzie," he paraphrased with an airy wave of his hand, "and bored be he who first cries 'Hold! Enough!' Bored by insects, I mean," he explained.

"Oh, you're incorrigible!" she cried, pouting and sitting down suddenly upon the log they had drawn up to the fire.

"Well," interrupted Cavanaugh dryly, "this looks like an all-day affair. Will we find you here when we come back, later?"

"Depends on the quality of our authors," said Bream; "but it's probable."

"All right. So-long." The wiry old man and the boy heaved up their canoe for the short portage and disappeared, crashing through the brush.

For a long period of silence the two left behind endeavored to read in the lee of the fire. Then Bream slapped his book down viciously, while tears from the smarting wood-smoke coursed down his nose.

"I'm licked!" he declared, leaping to his feet. "No genius ever lived who could carry the day against deer-flies and mosquitoes. Let's get out of here!"

"Let's!" she cried fervently in the jargon of childhood. "I'm perishing!"

They wrote a note to the doctor on a bit of paper, and then put their few things in the canoe.

"What do you say we paddle downstream to the lake? We will keep moving, anyway, and perhaps we can find a place to read there."

"Perfect." She nestled down contentedly in the canoe and drooped one hand over the gunwale into the clear, cold water.

He rambled on in an endless stream of talk, now wittily, now seriously, now in a strain of poetry that rang true because of the buoyant, clear-eyed youth of him. He enjoyed it, chuckling over his inexplicable volubility.

"I'm positively garrulous," he told her. "You must forgive me; I have never suffered from it before."

"As long as I don't suffer you may continue."

"Humph! You ought to suffer, since you are responsible for it!"

"I?" She was politely incredulous, looking at him beneath arched and lifted eyebrows.

"You!" he repeated firmly. "It's so

many years since I have had the pleasure of such delightful company that I am quite unnerved. It's positively startling to know a woman whose interests extend beyond a struggle to make both ends meet and the care of children in assorted sizes. Fine, honest women, lumbermen's wives are, but"—he shrugged helplessly—"you understand!"

"You censure but to praise," she said with mock demureness. "I shall reciprocate with praise without censure. You have helped give me a delightful ten days, Mr. Bream."

He glanced at her with twinkling eyes.

"Arch-plotter!" he grumbled. "You want to read the rest of my books."

"Discovered!" she wailed, and then added brightly, "but I'll discuss them all with you."

"Ah, that will be payment in full for everything. But I am a very exacting creditor."

"And I a most scrupulous debtor."

"Good! Then we shall get along together splendidly!"

"While there is yet a book unread."

He assumed an expression of extraordinary craft. "I have you in my power," he asserted triumphantly. "I have ordered a dozen new books from Toronto!"

They ran out of the mouth of the river into the blue bay about which rose the thickly wooded hills. From this point Hampton was invisible and inaudible, and in all the expanse of water, forest, and sky they were apparently the only living things. He guided the canoe out toward the middle of the little bay and sat back, basking in the warm sun.

"Now read," he commanded; "genius will prosper here."

And, opening her book, she read aloud London's grim story of the old northern Indian who, because of his age, is abandoned by his tribe to fight alone his last battle with starvation, darkness, and iron cold. When she had finished they were silent, oppressed by the inexorable despair of the tragedy.

Then, presently, because she was of the north country herself, she spun out for him Indian folk-lore tales, bred ages before in the gloomy depths of primeval forests, and sang weird, ululating songs that stirred the blood in him while they made him shiver. The boyish enthusiasm left his face and gave place to a gentle melancholy.

"That last song," he said, "is one of the beautiful things of the world. I never heard it before, but I know it is so."

"Why?"

"Because the word-pictures have made me sure again of the wonderful privilege of simply living."

"Have you ever doubted it?" Her eyes searched his brave, wholesome face curiously.

"No, I don't think so. Not even when I was in my greatest trouble. But one forgets the fact sometimes in the hurry and fight of accomplishing things." He rested his paddle and waved one arm toward the fresh, green forest. "Just as one forgets the miracle of this every spring or the miracle of the thousand colors every fall. That song made me realize them again."

"Then the unknown Indian poet did not live in vain. To have caused one such realization is excuse enough for any life."

"Oh, I like that!" His eyes flashed. "It's such a splendid answer to the Great Doubt. All the wise men in the world couldn't give a better."

"Perhaps I give it out of the depths of my ignorance," she smiled.

"No! Out of your wisdom. For the greatest folly of all is to try and reduce faith to an equation—and faith in the finest things is at the bottom of your ignorance."

"And you believe I have that faith?"

"I *know* it! It is as much a part of you as the air you breathe."

She looked away from him, and her eyes brooded upon the silent green places. A feeling of peace and delight stole over her as the sense of bitter reality, the recollections of fact, faded. It was sweet, this genuine tribute to what she had feared was lost in her. The seeds of his own fine faith fell gratefully upon the fallow ground of her heart and brought the tears to her eyes.

The day that you remember,
The day that I forget.

"The day that *I* remember," she thought, and borne on a stream of quiet ecstasy, yielded herself to the evanescent bliss of the perfect hour.

He talked on quietly, seriously, and each moment brought a new light or color to her mind, played upon a different note in the gamut of her stirring nature, filled her nostrils with a fresh perfume of joy.

The hours passed, slipping away swift-

footed, and the golden languor of spring-time seemed doubly rare through the medium of their perfect, innocent companionship.

At last, when the sun hung poised above the western hills, Bream turned their curved prow homeward. Red gold was on the water and blushing rose upon the stately cloud flotilla that beat slowly into the west like burdened galleons. Ricocheting across the water came the quavering idiotic laughter of a flock of loons, black specks in the distance, giving answer, it seemed, to the thin whining songs from the red mills that stood out tall and clear in the village. Along the farther shore crawled another craft, the doctor's, and they laughed as they pictured his disgust at the weak-kneed sportsmanship.

Then, presently, as Bream drove them strongly homeward, came another sound, foreign to the wild stillness and beauty, an even, regular beating, and around a long projecting point behind them appeared the company boat, trailing a cloud of low-lying smoke.

"Ah, the steamer!" cried Bream eagerly, resting his paddle to watch its approach. "I wonder if Allan is aboard her? He should be back to-night."

"Yes—I—wonder."

As if the sun had suddenly sunk behind the hills, the light that all day had made her loveliness seem almost unearthly died from Eloise's face. She closed her eyes as she listened to the tiny crashes with which the fabric of her dream collapsed. The brief illusion, spun of sunlight and the joy of youth, melted into nothing.

Half an hour later, as they drew near the landing, the steamer overtook them, and as she raised her eyes they rested upon the slim, blue-clad figure of her husband leaning upon the rail near the wheel-house.

The day was done.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LOOPHOLE

ALLAN brought with him the deed to the sections of timber land that he had gone south to purchase. It was made out to himself and Bream jointly and bore the great seal and arms of the province, insuring beyond question the legality and authenticity of the title. Burchard & Hill

had been utterly defeated without a struggle. Bream took carefully into his hand the crackling paper that represented his dream achieved, and fingered and read it almost as if in awe. Like a boy with a long-desired possession, he admired the physical appearance of it, the color of the seal, the quality of the paper, the transcription of his name. He said little but he felt much, and placed that paper high in the sacred place of his life.

That night Bream made out a check to Allan for fifteen thousand dollars, and this the latter mailed to the Sawpits bank, for he had opened a private account there on his way back from Toronto.

Within a few days the news of the partnership was common property in Hampton and the partners had become doubtful heroes, for while folk wished the new venture all prosperity, they frankly doubted its success and feared the fury and revenge of Burchard & Hill. At the same time they rejoiced in the wholesome check the others had evidently received.

That it was so considered at home was made plain by Tom Hill's attitude when he returned to Hampton. He clumped about the town looking for Bream with the air of a toothache-tortured bear, his face scowling blackly, his fists deep in his pockets, his little eyes asquint. He at last located his erstwhile river boss in the little shanty that Bream had rented for a song and termed the "office."

"What the devil have you been up to?" he demanded, refusing the chair that Bream indicated.

"You ought to know," was the matter-of-fact reply. "I only hope you are not going to be unpleasant about what can't be helped."

"You do, eh? Well, you hope again! What you did was a blasted piece of fiendish treachery."

"You're mistaken there," said Bream coldly, scorning to take offense at the man's abuse. "While you were in Randall, didn't you receive my resignation dated ten o'clock in the morning of the day you went away?"

"Humph!" Hill snorted angrily. "Don't try to spring that! Any one can dope out a dated alibi."

"You'll find a copy of it on the mill bulletin-board," Bream told him, "and plenty of witnesses to prove the hour I stuck it up there."

Hill leaned against the door-jamb looking out, one heavy boot crossed before the other, his little, bloodshot, glittering eyes sullenly regarding the activities of his great mill. For a few moments he was silent. Then he turned menacingly back to Bream.

"You're pretty slippery with excuses," he thundered, thrusting his bearded face forward, "but they don't go with me! You knew at the time what our firm was going to do, and—"

"You're mistaken again," said Bream coolly. "Certainly your note to me that morning was vague enough—and purposefully so, I'll wager!"

"Well, damn it, you knew, anyway! You heard me say I thought we ought to get that Y. And then as soon as my back was turned you stole it away from us!"

"Not at all! Your leaving town unexpectedly upset all my plans. I had no intention of making a move until I was released from the mill. Your going forced me to do something. But just the same I'll admit that I intended to get that Y. I had as much right to it as you. It was free government land."

"And it was practically ours—had been for years!"

"Yes, but you remember I said that the government wasn't sentimental about such things?"

Hill, who remembered perfectly, and who had actually taken his unexpected journey on the spur of that sentence, considered Bream's expostulation as insult added to injury and burst into uncontrollable anger. With great fists clenched, face congested, and the cords of his neck standing out, he leaned over Bream's flat-top table and cursed him until no breath was left in his body.

"You stole that land, you traitor!" he panted, "and now God help you! If you think it's any joke to get that timber out, just try it! And when you're broke an' down an' out don't you come whinin' around here for a job! By God, I'll hound you through this country till you can't get a hand's turn of work! I will, so help me! An' that's my last word now or ever!"

Somehow Bream finally got rid of him without a physical encounter. For a while the incident depressed him, but he eventually consoled himself with the thought that it was only what one might expect from a man of Hill's outlook, and was able that night to give Allan and Eloise a humorous

and detailed account of the meeting. Then he forgot it completely, for there was too much else to occupy his mind. The firm of Bream & Mackenzie was in the throes of organization.

The first step was the hiring of the men, and Bream undertook it the night that saw the completion of the work at the Burchard & Hill mill. Al Borwell and Pete Dorlon, his former lieutenants, he engaged on the spot for walking boss and foreman of the new camp, and they, with loyalty to their leader undimmed, yearned both for a chance to serve him and to square matters with Hill for many remembered abuses. In a conference with them, Bream named for employment some sixty-five men from his former gangs and left the actual hiring to the two. A combined clerk and scaler was found in the person of Barry, and Bream then turned his attention to the important matter of securing good logging teams.

Meanwhile Mackenzie had not been idle. In several trips to Sawpits (the company steamer was chartered as a mail and freight-carrier and forced to take passengers) he had perfected the financial standing of the new firm. First he had started a new bank-account under the name of Bream & Mackenzie in the Sawpits bank, and to this had transferred \$5,000 from the private accounts of both himself and Bream—in this way providing the sum to be spent for equipment. Furthermore, he had seen to the printing of stationery, time-books, time-slips, and other matter incident to the establishment of the firm. Lastly he had made certain, by personal canvass, that the Bream & Mackenzie pay-slips would be promptly honored at their face value in the more prominent stores and saloons of Sawpits and Hampton—an arrangement indispensable where shanty-men come long distances to get their money.

Mackenzie's greatest concern was for the recognition of the firm's probity.

Almost the first thing Bream did after Mackenzie's return from Toronto was to place an order with a large supply house for the heavy equipment he would need in the woods, such as stoves, cables, axes, saws, blocks, cant-hooks, peaveys, crow-bars, sledges, *et cetera*.

Now, several weeks later, when he received a telegram from this concern that the whole shipment was ready to move at

his command, he had so maneuvered that he was ready to act upon it. He wired back: "Ship to arrive Abimoming, Ontario, July 10." This date allowed him ten days in which to conclude his remaining preparations.

Immediately, then, he bought his other supplies—huge quantities of food staples, winter feed for the horses, a medicine-kit, mending materials, clothing, tobacco, and matches for the "van," blankets for the bunks, playing-cards, and a few mouth-organs for amusement. Practically all of these he secured in Sawpits, where were several large wholesale firms. And in this case also he gave orders to have the stuff shipped so that it would reach Abimoming on the tenth.

Then, on the ninth, with Dorlon, Borwell, and a first gang of forty men, he boarded the mixed train at Sawpits for the hundred-mile trip north, this being but the first stage of their long journey to the Y. In a freight-car next the engine were the company horses, creatures of special training and intelligence, mighty haulers and quick thinkers.

Abimoming, then the terminus of the Canadian Central's northernmost spur, was a new town, but a growing one. Already two good-sized mills occupied opposite sides of the placid river that gave it its name, and a third was building. It was to insure the purchase of his timber by the owners of these mills that he took the trip. Already, he knew, they were sawing and shipping from near-by cuttings that bordered the Burchard & Hill holdings on the west, but he could see that they must eventually look to the Y and the timber it controlled for the bulk of their business.

As the train bumped and jerked its slow way northward Bream, studying his map, became more and more impressed with the mettle-testing quality of the task he had undertaken. The throat of the Y was more than fifty miles by air-line north of Abimoming, and a full eighty by river. Across this territory, untraveled now except by surveyors and trappers, his supplies and equipment must be hauled.

One circumstance, however, was in his favor. Several years before silver-mining operations had been started just south of the Y and a tote road had been cut along the bank of the river as far as that camp. Bream had been assured that, although the mine was now abandoned, the road

was still usable. Beyond the mine it would be pioneering in virgin forest.

They reached the town that evening and put up at lumbermen's boarding-houses. Next morning they found that some of the expected supplies had already come, and while Bream interviewed the mill-owners regarding the purchase of timber, Dorlon and Borwell made ready for the long *trek* into the wilderness. The remaining equipment arrived on the noon train, and the start was set for the following day.

The plan of the march was simple. All the teams but one, together with a third of the men under Dorlon, were to go north to the Y, select the camp site, and start the erection of the shacks. The remaining twenty-seven under Borwell, with one team to haul their cook outfit, were to follow more slowly, examining the channel of the river and removing from it stumps, rocks, and other obstacles that might become formidable jam-builders during the drive of the ensuing spring. These tasks, it was calculated, would occupy each party a fortnight, by which time Bream expected that Mackenzie and himself could come north.

As he had hoped, he found no trouble at all in disposing of his timber at Abimoming. The mill-owners, including the one whose plant was building, bid separately on the ten million feet he guaranteed to deliver, and he finally signed a contract with Krug & Lableau at a figure that surprised even himself.

Thus, before he started back to Hampton, it was the 15th of July and the teams had come down to Abimoming for the second hauling of equipment. Reports of progress in the interior were encouraging.

The first evening of his return he called upon the Mackenzies, although he had completed his business with Allan in the afternoon. He wanted to see Eloise. He had missed her while he was away, missed her gentle presence, her cheerful, spirited conversation—the delightful influence of her personality on his life.

All through the late spring they had seen more and more of one another. Sometimes a matter of the firm's business took him to Mrs. Barry's of an evening, sometimes Allan's hearty invitation to a game of pinocle. Often it was merely his own inclination, given excuse by Eloise's bantering assertion that her debt-laden conscience demanded the discussion of some book she

had read. And as these evenings came to be more frequent and regular, Bream grew to anticipate them as the most pleasurable events in his life.

With a sort of rueful brotherly affection he envied Allan the companionship of Eloise, accusing him mentally of neglecting to bring out to the full the responsiveness of her nature. This was the first step in a gradually confirmed doubt as to the perfection of their relationship. The second came as his intimacy with them grew. He began to feel inexplicably that something definite and well understood intervened between them. He recalled the man's occasional wistful looks as he sought to please her, and the unintentionally revealed bleakness of the girl's eyes on certain days when her natural buoyancy seemed forced.

"What is it?" he asked himself. "Why aren't they perfectly happy? They have everything—youth, love, money, each other, and still— There is something that she can never forget. It is her eyes that always show the pain. And his pleading. I wonder what it is. I wonder?"

Now the heart of summer was upon them, and the whole world laughed for joy of the warmth and comfort. The cold north winds had ceased and given place to breezes that fanned up from the east with warm showers tucked under their cloud-wings. The sun was hot, and in the forest the balsam and pine gums oozed out like fragrant amber tears.

Insects were gone now as if a plague had swept them away, and folk rocked comfortably on their rickety piazzas far into the late twilight—sometimes until after nine o'clock. This was the nightly practise of Bream and the Mackenzies, and while Dick and Eloise wrangled over what to them were the subtler aspects of music or letters, Allan buried himself in one of Bream's few scientific books or played Canfield. When darkness would put an end to his diversion he would sit silent for a while, listening to the conversation of the others, good-humoredly scornful, a trifle bored.

"Look here," he would interject occasionally, "what is the use of making such hard work of your pleasures? A lot of these writers never imagined half the artistic effects that people set down to them. If they did, they'd be so self-conscious for fear they'd skip one that they wouldn't

be able to write a word. Now this Meredith you were talking about just now: I don't know much about him, but I'll bet he is 'obscure,' as they call it, because he never was exactly sure of what he wanted to say, or else he was mighty careless how he said it."

And then Bream, interested by the certain element of truth in the man's criticism, would endeavor to draw him out further. But Allan would get to his feet yawning, call his wife a "schoolmarm," and invite Bream to go to the corner for a nightcap. Or he would ask concerning the practical handling of woods difficulties that his reading had suggested.

One night, when he had departed on his regular pilgrimage alone, Bream turned to Eloise, laughing.

"He calls you a 'schoolmarm' enough in fun. I wonder whether he would like it in real life?"

"Mercy! I don't think so! But what makes you ask?"

"There's a vacancy in the village school here for next year, and it has just occurred to me that perhaps you might like something to keep you occupied while Allan is away at the camp."

"What a splendid idea!" she cried. "I've often wondered about that myself. I shall perish if I don't have something to do here next winter." Her eyes lighted up mischievously. "And perhaps I could have a little bank-account of my own by spring!"

"Not a very large one boarding round," he laughed. "But if you'd really like to try it I think it can be arranged. Dr. Cavanaugh has a good deal of influence in such matters."

"Oh, Dick, won't it be fun!" Some time since they had slipped naturally into the familiar address. "Imagine me presiding over all the urchins in Hampton! How soon can you know?"

"There's no hurry. It's early yet. Just spring the news on our cynical critic some time when he is in good humor, and if he gives his O. K. we will start to pull wires at the other end."

During these busy weeks of launching their maiden enterprise the partners worked in perfect harmony. A different field of endeavor had fallen naturally to each. While Bream was away looking after the larger interests Mackenzie remained at home, disposing of the numerous second-

ary problems that constantly cropped up for settlement.

The final week before their departure was devoted to the clearing up of odds and ends. The inevitable last-moment list of overlooked supplies was ordered and the second gang for the camp notified to be ready on the twenty-eighth. Reports from the west branch told that all the preliminary force had arrived there safely and that the camp was almost completed. Everything appeared auspicious.

The last morning but two before the departure Bream left Mother McCracken's for the little "office" near the river some time after eight o'clock. He walked through the village briskly, intending to stop at the general store and post-office to inquire for any mail that might have arrived on the steamer the night before. As he entered the building he noticed Tommy Hill walking restlessly back and forth before the partition that shut off the village telephone and telegraph connection.

Making certain that there was no mail for him, he had turned to go out when the lad approached him.

"Say, Mr. Bream," he said in a low, confidential voice, "help a feller out, will ye?"

"Sure, if I can," assented Bream readily. "What's the trouble?"

"Gosh, enough! The old man's gone and made me work this summer—office-boy around that blame old mill. I ain't had no vacation. Why, Mr. Bream, I ain't even been fishin' since that time you was along, an' here it is pretty near August."

"H-m! I'm beginning to see. Well, go on."

The boy held out a folded sheet of paper. "Send this telegram for me, will ye?" he asked. "Miss Jenks ain't showed up yet, an' I don't know where she is. I got a date to go fishin' with the doc, an' I'm half an hour late already. Pa said this was important, an' I don't dast go till I know she'll get it sure."

Bream took the paper. "Of course I'll send it," he said. "I'm in no special hurry. Run along."

The boy leaped toward the door, his face radiant. "Gee! I won't fergit your doin' this!" he cried. "So-long!"

"So-long," laughed Bream, and watched him speed down the road, the dust spurting up under his bare feet.

As fate would have it, he had hardly disappeared when Miss Jenks entered the store. Bream gave her the telegram.

"Mr. Hill asked that this be sent off right away," he said, with the idea of covering Tommy's retreat.

He had almost reached the door on his way out when the frowzy, swarthy-skinned young woman called him back.

"I can't quite make this out," she said. "What's this Y mean? Would you mind readin' it?"

Startled by the familiar sound of the letter, Bream took the message. It was addressed to Ezra Burchard and written in Tom Hill's almost illegible, childish scrawl.

"Can get half interest in Y for fifty thousand," he translated slowly. "Wire consent quick."

For an instant Bream stared blankly at the words. Then he read them again, as if unable to register their meaning. Finally a sudden shock that was as yet not fear smote him. Uncertain, scenting danger, groping for the truth, he thought quickly.

"N-no w-wonder you couldn't make it out," he stammered with an unnatural laugh. "T-there is a mistake here." He turned again toward the door. "I'll take it back and have it made right."

"Thanks so much, Mr. Bream," tittered Miss Jenks. "Ain't it good I spoke?"

CHAPTER IX

OUT OF A THORN A ROSE

BREAM did not hear her. He had already left the store and was walking in a daze toward the "office," the telegram crushed in his hand. He was trying to think the unthinkable and making sorry work of it.

"A half interest in the Y," said the message. Surely it was not his half interest. There was but one other—Mackenzie's. What, then, did this mean? A grotesque thought struck him. Had Mackenzie tried to sell him out? For a moment he felt as if he had insulted Allan to his face. Mackenzie sell him out? One of the best fellows that ever lived? The man who had leaped into the breach when he himself was in sorest need of help? Oh, no! Impossible!

But who else could it be his reason

protested? They had their deed and title clear. No one could possibly have tricked them out of the land. It *must* be Mackenzie!

He stumbled across a street and turned in toward the little shanty where he and Allan met daily. The door was locked, but he opened it and went inside for a look around. Both his desk and Allan's were untouched, everything was as it had been the night before. Evidently Allan had not yet come. He went outside, locked the door again, and, more by instinct than volition, pointed his steps toward Mrs. Barry's.

Why should Mackenzie want to sell him out? The endless questions began again. Why be party to such a deal as one thief would not turn on another? What had he, Bream, done that he deserved such treachery? His mind pounded over these problems almost in rhythm with his steps, now in accusation of Allan, now in his defense—a very battledore and shuttlecock of doubtful belief.

Unconvinced one way or the other, he reached Mrs. Barry's, his face livid, but a smile on his lips. The Mackenzies were both there, Eloise on the porch, one arm twined round a pillar that supported the roof, Allan with one foot on the sidewalk and the other on the second step, looking up at her smiling, hat in hand.

For an instant the tableau burned itself on Bream's brain. Then it changed. Eloise straightened and Allan set the raised foot beside the other on the sidewalk.

"Hello, Dick," he called cheerily. "I was just coming down. Want to see me about anything?"

Bream saluted the girl. "Yes, for a minute," he said in a voice he hardly recognized as his own. "Will you come inside?"

"What's the matter, aren't you well, Dick?" asked the girl with quick concern as he mounted the steps. She had noted his ghastly pallor.

"Not quite up to the mark, I guess," he replied, just conscious of her question. "Heat, probably."

She started to follow them inside, but Bream turned and spoke to her crisply. "If you please, Eloise, this is something between only Allan and myself." She shrank back, rebuffed, and in the second that he looked at her he saw a flicker of haunting fear supplant the hurt in her

eyes. Mackenzie, who had gone first, looked sharply around at his partner, as if sniffing suspicion. Then he proceeded into the bare living-room.

Bream, his nerves singing with tension, did not sit down as he held out to Mackenzie the crumpled message in his hand. "I've had ten minutes of hell over this paper," he said huskily; "read it and explain it if you can."

Mackenzie took the sheet, straightened it out, and held it up to the light that streamed in the front windows. For a second or two he did not move. Not a muscle of his face twitched, nor did he lose color.

"What does this mean?" he suddenly cried excitedly. "What does this mean? Who's done this? What has happened?"

"That's what I've come here to ask you, Allan," said Bream steadily. "God knows it can only mean one of two things. Either some one's made a fool of me or—or—forgive me if I say it, Allan—either that or you've sold me out!" He took an impulsive step toward his partner. "Allan, look at me. Tell me you don't know anything about this! Tell me! Now!"

Mackenzie met the occasion superbly. He straightened his slim, aristocratic body, lifted his head, and turned his face toward Bream. But, command his will as he might, his eyes would not quite meet Bream's. They looked above him, around him, at his forehead, and at his chin, but they dared not cross that level, burning glance.

"That's a damned insult!" he grated between clenched teeth.

Suddenly Bream knew. The realization came to him easily, surely—an unshakable conviction. The timbre of Mackenzie's voice rang false, his every motion advertised itself as that of an actor; his wavering eyes completed the betrayal. His carefully erected sham collapsed, and Bream knew!

For an instant he felt giddy, as if he were going to fall. Then his head cleared, and, with realization, his rage, a fearful, primitive thing, stirred in its dark prison beneath his sunny nature. His certainty of the other's guilt intensified with every moment, and to it was now added the angry shame at his own sickening gullibility. That growling, stirring, bestial thing far down in the depths of him reared and burst its bonds.

"God damn you!" he roared thickly. "Insult is it? You sold me out, you crooked cur! You know it, and I know it! Don't you lie to me!" He choked. "I could kill you where you stand, you vile whelp!"

He took an involuntary step forward, and Mackenzie, blanched with fear, leaped back, knocking over a chair. This shrinking cowardice fed the blood-lust that raced through Bream's veins, but the fall of the chair roused him, sounded a warning note in his brain against the thing that was overpowering him. With his last ounce of resistance he fought the murderous impulse that would have hurled him, snarling, at the other's throat.

Mackenzie, fascinated, afraid to move, watched the atavic struggle the man endured with terrible fear, shrinking from the sight of those corded muscles, distended veins, and bloodshot eyes. He whimpered with horror and fright.

At last Bream, wet, white, and sick, sank into a chair, exhausted, but the master of himself. For a long time he remained thus, his eyes closed. Then he roused.

"Sit down," he commanded weakly, and Mackenzie obeyed, his muscles tense, furtive, ready to leap. For a few moments there was silence while normal forces crept back through Bream's veins.

"What did you do it for?" he finally asked in a shaking voice that assumed Mackenzie's guilt, although the other had neither affirmed nor denied.

Mackenzie's glance, like his brain, darted back and forth with the rapidity of a snake's tongue. Then, because he was guilty and afraid, he chose the wiser course.

"I wanted to make money," he admitted sullenly.

"You could have made it if you had stuck by me."

"I wanted it quick, and I could make more."

"Yes, but you had to ruin me to do it!" Bream's voice rose sharply. "Damn it, what kind of a man are you?"

"Hill wanted the Y, didn't he?" defended Mackenzie.

"Yes, but not to work it with me! He hates me, and you know it! W-why, you're not such a fool you can't see that! He wouldn't lift a finger to buy me out even, and you know I could never have

swung the thing alone. You knew all these things, and yet you sold me out. By God! I believe—" He looked quickly at the sullen gray face of his partner and saw it for the first time with understanding—read aright the significance of the large, almost feminine eyes, calculative when half-closed, the indefinite chin, the red, overfull lips.

Then, in a flash, certain unsuspected incidents of the past eight weeks began to stand out clearly in a new light: why his ignorance concerning the newly arrived Mackenzies had given rise to Hill's sarcasm; why husband and wife traveled through the wild as they did when railroads were near; the mythical "business" in the south that was so easily disposed of by wire and mail from Hampton; Allan's turn for the gaming-tables; his rambling, indefinite account of his own life; and, lastly, his sudden, inexplicable eagerness to go into business with Bream.

He saw these things now without the gloss of graceful personality or mitigating circumstance. They were coherent and of a pattern; they built for him the character of a new Mackenzie. The malice aforethought in the selling out was clear as day. He saw himself as a dupe, a catspaw, a blind clown for a catchpenny juggler. The murderous fury stirred again deep down in him, but this time he controlled it ere it could break its bounds.

"So that's the kind you are, is it?" he cried. "A common, swindling thief, a shell-game man with a polish. Oh, I sucked the bait, I swallowed it whole, all right. I see things now. That partnership contract! Hell! What a farce that is! No option clause, no legal restraints, no jail in the background to keep us toeing the mark. I thought we were partners instead of cutthroats. It isn't worth the paper it's printed on!"

"Well, it could have been," retorted Mackenzie. "Why didn't you stand out for a clause providing for an option on my share? I couldn't have dickered with Hill. You'd have had me then!"

"Had you! Who wanted to have you?" Bream's voice rose angrily. "I don't do business that way, but by the eternal, I will after this. Had you! You had *me* in a corner that day I was mill boss. I thought we couldn't fail, I was sure of success, I was sure of *you*, and you took advantage of me, intending all the time to

sell me out. It was smooth and slick and—" Suddenly, with the conviction of a revelation, an idea smote him, and he leaped to his feet, glowering, menacing.

Mackenzie, startled, cowered back.

"I see it all now! *That's* why you hit the trail through this country. You're always on the getaway. They're after you; they're hounding you! And I'm just one you've done for!" He laughed in an ecstasy of scorn. "Oh, how easy honest men are! That mine last winter! How many did you do for then? And those ignorant Russian farmers, and your fertilizer! Another swindle!" He smashed one fist down on the table so that Mackenzie leaped to his feet, livid. "Deny it, you dog!" he blazed out. "Deny you're wanted in every province of the Dominion!"

Mackenzie swallowed convulsively and tried to speak, but no sound came from his parched lips.

"Pah! You can't! I know it. Now I've got you where I want you. You'll never ruin another man. I'll fix that, so help me!"

"Well, what are you going to do?" The question was sullen but frightened, fearful.

"Do! I'm going to turn you over to the people that want you. I'm going to send you to jail for the rest of your life."

"Oh, no, Dick! Not that! For God's sake—"

"To jail, I said," cried Bream, his voice rising. "It'll finish me, but I'll do it. I'll settle accounts for all of us poor fools together, the whole turkey of us! I'll—"

The door leading into the hall opened slowly and Eloise, pale but fearless, stood framed there. One hand rested on the knob and the other was clenched against her breast. She stood erect, her head held proudly high, her level gaze resting first upon one and then the other of the men.

Bream met her look with flashing eyes and knitted brows, resentful at her intrusion. Allan evaded it, bowing his head and looking at the floor. Only a little less keenly that she did he feel the pangs she suffered because of this crisis. Knowing what Bream's and Cavanaugh's friendship had meant to her, what pleasure the mere appearance of respectability had brought, he realized to the full her present anguish and despair.

Venomously he cursed the twist of circumstance that had caused it. To have

manipulated skilfully, smoothly; to have disappeared from Hampton without suspicion or incident while her friendships were at their ripest—that had been his hope. Now how utterly he had failed! Providence itself—had blundered.

"I overheard you, and I had to come in," she said faintly, her pale lips scarcely moving.

Bream bowed stiffly, afraid to trust his speech, chafing more and more at her presence in the scene. The girl turned to her husband.

"Allan, leave us, please," she begged. "I have something to say to Mr. Bream."

"I prefer him to stay here," said Bream shortly. "I don't propose to have him out of my sight—until I'm rid of him for good."

"He will not run away," she replied quietly, meeting his hard gaze. "If he does, I will stay here and take the responsibility for what he has done."

"If he does," repeated Bream savagely, "I'll follow him till I find him, and *this* time I'll kill him!" He drilled Mackenzie through and through.

"Go, Allan, please go," said the girl, and the other slunk away, closing the door after him.

When the sounds of his departing had ceased Dick turned to her. "What is it?" he asked. "Won't you sit down?"

She shook her head, twisting her fingers together until the joints showed white.

"I heard what you said," she burst out suddenly, and paused, "about sending him to jail. When I heard that I couldn't stay out any longer. I—" she broke off.

"Why did you come in at all?" he asked more gently. "I wish you were not here. It will only hurt you to know about all this."

"Know about it!" She laughed with harsh suddenness, throwing one arm wide. "Don't you suppose I guessed what was the matter when you came this morning, when I've been dreading and expecting it for weeks?"

"You! Expecting this?" He gasped, unable for a moment to comprehend. "You, too—like him! Oh, God!"

The realization of her words numbed him for a moment, as if some part of him had been crushed by a physical weight. Then the hurt of it surged over him, almost unbearable, lashing him to anguished frenzy. He burst out between gritted

teeth: "And you never warned me! You went on here day after day knowing what was in his mind, expecting the crash, and yet letting me go to ruin—playing me, dangling me, reading my books, acting a part until he was ready to spring the trap!"

He turned away from her suddenly, only to whirl back. "You let him get me into this partnership farce, sat by that night knowing I was going to be swindled, and did not lift a finger to prevent it! Two words and I would have known. A look, a motion, *anything*, and I would have suspected! But no. You let that criminal business go through, a willing partner in it. Great God! Is that the kind of woman you are? Is there no truth or honor left anywhere—even in you? Faugh!" He turned away again, revolted.

White and haggard, the girl faced him. "It isn't true, Dick! All that isn't true. I *can't* have you think it. I can't! I didn't know, but I was afraid—he had done it so often before."

"Ah!"

"But this time! I hoped— He said he liked you so much, said there was honest money to be earned up there in the Y, swore he had no way to ruin you. But he lied to me, as he has always done before. And I was afraid all the time, oh, so afraid! And that night you signed the partnership papers I was sick with fear. I went up-stairs; I couldn't see it!"

"And yet you never warned me!" His voice was iron.

Her hands dropped loosely to her sides and she grew suddenly quiet, as if the passion had flowed from her finger-tips. Once more her head lifted proudly, like that of a queen alone at the foot of a scaffold.

"Dick," she said gently, and met his glittering gaze, "I couldn't. He is my husband. Poor a thing as he is, he is that, and because he is, I couldn't. Oh, don't you see? I was bound, bound in my own honor. It is all I have left. Love and respect and happiness and illusion he has taken, but not that. That has brought me through these awful years, that and the knowledge that the inmost soul of me is my own to keep good and true! How could I speak? How could I? I might as well have killed myself!"

Bream said nothing. The chaos of pain and disillusion in his mind ceased its clamor, and out of it streamed a faint, white light of vision, as dawn might have

broken upon the young world. Such was the strength of his own innate rectitude, so clean his unsuspecting nature, that her desperate plea fell like balm upon his soul.

It rang true with the highest demands of his ideal of woman, his ideal of her. Pride, self-respect, honor—these were the unshakable foundations upon which his admiration for her had risen. He understood now the impassable barrier that stood between herself and Allan. He lashed out with loathing rage at the man.

"Kill yourself!" he cried. "Rather kill him. If honor is so much to you, you dishonor yourself by living with him. But you sha'n't much longer, for he is going to pay for this and for everything. I'm going to jail him if it ruins me to do it!"

For a moment she was silent. Then she bowed her head.

"Oh!" she cried piteously, "haven't I suffered enough without that? You don't know—" She advanced a step toward him, her hands again clenched at her sides. "Listen, Dick! Try to understand! I've said I have lived north all my life." She spoke nervously, rapidly. "I have. My father and mother were missionaries at Moose Factory on Hudson Bay—are yet. They sent me to England to school when they had taught me all they knew. I was educated, and I traveled, but I wouldn't stay abroad. I wanted to come home to the north, to the wild places. I did, and was happy. Then, because the factor was a widower, I grew to be the hostess at the post, though there were other women there older than I was. People said that the factor and I would marry, but that could never have been.

"Then, more than three years ago, Allan came. Just when the *brigades* were coming down and the trees were budding and there was spring everywhere. He was young and handsome. He fascinated me, just as he fascinated you—as he fascinates everybody. For the first time in my life I loved a man, and inside a month we were married. My father married us. Poor father! He doesn't know what I've been through since. We went away. I have never been back.

"I was happy for three months. Then, one night, Allan took me away quickly from some town. We were pursued. I discovered certain things and forced him to tell me the truth."

She paused and looked away, her lips

quivering, her breast rising and falling fast. Bream averted his eyes.

In the kitchen Mrs. Barry, blissfully ignorant of the drama being enacted so near her, droned a hymn. The metallic whining of the saws at the mills came plainly to them through the open windows, a dominant note against which sounded the lesser noises of the summer day—the shouts of playing children, the shrill of a rooster, the creaking rattle of a springless wagon passing by, the tinkle of distant cow-bells.

"You don't know—you *can't* know—what that truth cost me," she went on. "No man can. Only a woman who has seen her world go crashing into hell could understand. For a time I thought of leaving him, but the knowledge of my disgrace and the fear of breaking those hearts that had loved me held me back. That and something else—the same sense that refused to let me warn you against signing the partnership papers. In my heart marriage was sacred, a bond until the end, whatever life brought. That is why I have stayed with him, hoping always that, because he loved me, he would change.

"Back and forth we've been driven across this country, living like outcasts, afraid to make friends, only settling down when Allan saw a chance to make money. And that's been my existence!" She held out her hands in pleading.

"And now"—her voice broke—"you want to put him in jail; you want to complete the ruin of my miserable life and send me back disgraced to those who I thought would never know! Spare me that, Dick. We'll do anything if you'll only say you will. We'll go away to-night. We'll leave the money in the business, and you can send it to me when you've made that much. If it's lost, it is lost. It is what we deserve. Let us do this, let us do something, only don't hurt me any more!"

Spent, she sank down into a chair and buried her face in her arms upon the ugly old center-table.

Proud and queenly she was no longer. The pitiful humility of her voice, the weary lines of her relaxed body, betokened her utter abandonment of the too great struggle, the inevitable breaking of her spirit beneath its cruel burden.

Dick Bream, standing near the door where she had entered, looked down with

swelling heart upon the lovely head that Mackenzie had brought so low. Gone was his anger now, except for a steadily burning hatred of Allan; gone his resentment against her, his misunderstanding, the memory of what had come between them; gone everything but the thought of her. He saw the panorama of her life as she had painted it, the romance, the aspiration, the defeat, the black, hopeless outlook. How much she had suffered, he told himself, turning a bright, courageous face to the world, always sweet, always "playing the game" without complaint.

The pathos of the thing suddenly clutched him by the throat, stinging his eyes with tears, and a wave of pity and tenderness swept over him. And in his heart was born a great yearning to take her in his arms and comfort her, to sweep her up and out of the wretchedness that was her life.

With tenderness came shame. He compared his own provocation with hers and his murderous outburst with her long enduring. The hot color crept up, burning his neck and face and throbbing hands. How unworthy he was even to stand in her presence, she who through all had kept the high vision and consciousness of self from tarnishment! He was very humble and felt himself looking far up at her, as if, like the Blessed Damozel, she leaned out from the bar of heaven.

And then, in the wonder and worship of her, the spark from the unsullied shrine of his heart leaped to the tinder of what had been their unsullied companionship, and love was accomplished in his soul.

Beautiful as a snow-drop out of the snow it came, beautiful as the first wild bird-song of spring, as the blush that steals across the gray of dawn. There was no violence, no tumult of passion. It was as if the miracle of creation had been suddenly repeated; where before there had been darkness and void, now there were beauty and glory and a still exaltation that lifted his soul to communion on a higher plane than he might ever touch again. The hour in his life for the one woman had struck.

Instinctively he turned away, lest she should see his radiant face. Not yet had realization come, bringing with it inevitable pain. He told himself vaguely that for the experience of this one moment all of life had been worth the living.

Eloise lifted her head slowly from her cradling arms. Her eyes showed signs of tears, but she was once more in command of herself—had taken up again her heart-breaking burden.

"What are you going to do—with us, Dick?" she asked.

Suddenly he dared not look at her, dared not speak, since eyes and voice and soul would shout aloud this ecstasy that flooded him. Yet speak he must, for she was waiting.

The sudden memory of his sharp, bitter words to her smote him. He saw himself as one who had heaped injustice on injury and cruelty on both. Oh, that he might blot his part in this from memory!

He turned to her impulsively.

"Forgive me!" he begged with deep contrition. "I've been a brute; I'm—I'm sorry."

She raised her eyes to his compassionate face and smiled wanly.

"If *you* can ever forgive, then we will think of me. What are you going to do?"

His passion surged up in him wildly, but he retained his grip on himself.

"I—don't—know," he answered thickly, like a man who awakens from sleep. "Will you—keep him here until tomorrow?"

"Yes," she said. "I promise."

"I'll tell you then," he cried, hardly knowing what he said, and made his way, dazed, from the house.

CHAPTER X

OUT OF A ROSE A THORN

ARRIVED at his unadorned, masculine room at Mother McCracken's, he sank into the patent rocker near the bed and mechanically fumbled for his pipe and tobacco. During the preoccupied, almost unconscious walk across town the first never-to-be-forgotten glory of his love-realization faded, for because we are earthy we must return to earth, though we wander ever so far toward the celestial. Now Bream began to see the truth and to feel the dull despairing ache that his vision brought him.

"So this is my romance!" his heart cried out. "For this I have kept myself clean, for this I have dreamed and planned and hoped all my life! And now—my love-life is ended before it has begun!"

There was no light-minded shrugging of the shoulders in Bream's regret. He knew that the one hour had struck and the one woman come, and that, however long he might live, there could be no other hour nor any other woman. A great, poignant bitterness that was a voiceless rebellion swelled within him, and he sat mute amid the blackening ruins of his golden dream.

Vaguely he remembered that former time when he had sat here, the day he brought her down to Hampton. How much had happened since then! What a gamut of life experiences he had run! Partnership, business success, friendship, wreck, disillusion, love, despair—all these. "Enough for two lifetimes," he muttered. Every thought of her now was colored by some sweet or painful association.

The books in the two narrow shelves above him had been their little world and were fragrant of her spirit because her hands had held them. He could not look, he could not think without feeling the inextricable tangle of their two natures, turning, cleaving together like sturdy plants lending one another strength in the struggle upward. Now—the figure vaguely appealed to him—just as he had reached the sun he was cut off at the root and they had fallen apart.

"Ugh!" he cried in utter self-loathing, "what a selfish beast I am to sit here whining when she has been in a living hell for years! *Oh, Eloise, my sweet, my beloved!*"

At thought of her misery he writhed in physical and mental torture, grinding his teeth while wave after wave of black fury swept over him. "What can I do?" he groaned. "What can I do?"

He could not yet see his way clearly, for the drug of his passion was still strong in his senses. After a while his anger died out and his humble worship returned. Like a serf lifting love-heavy eyes to a passing princess, he looked up to his vision of her, and it strengthened him to bear his wretched part bravely before the world.

"How shall I be worthy of her if I cannot bear love for her sake?" he asked himself. And strength and high resolution flowed in through the channels of his soul, inspiring him to his hopeless task.

To bear himself unflinchingly and honorably!

How simple to keep the spirit of honor. So long as he lived she should never sus-

pect by look, word, or deed of his that he had ever loved her. In the contemplation and keeping of that resolution lay his salvation and both their honors. He should not fail.

But the letter of honor? What should he do now? How should he meet the situation that the knowledge of his love had precipitated? How unravel the net of emotions and desires that entangled him?

There was Mackenzie. Should he go scot free? His fury against the man stirred like a living thing. Never, he told himself. Then returned the thought of Eloise. *The letter of honor.* If he jailed Mackenzie, would it not be revenging himself on her? Would not she, as usual, be the innocent, ultimate sufferer? There was no solution that way, since his great desire was to lighten her burdens, not increase them.

How, then? Should he let them both go out of his life? With sublime indifference he overrode the vows his anger had wrung from him an hour before. If there was happiness for her that way, they should go. He could put her out of his life. Just as sweet, should he never see her again, would be the memory of his one perfect moment, just as rare, just as exalted. From that, time, whatever it brought, could never take away one iota of glory. It had been ordained as his love experience; so it should remain.

Could he give her happiness in parting? His quick instinct negated the question even as he repeated it. To send her forth again into the life that had brought her present misery would be a mockery, a refinement of torture. Truly there was little honor in that for any of them.

He found himself facing an insurmountable wall. He got to his feet and began pacing slowly up and down the room, his head bent, his eyes fixed, unseeing, upon the floor, his pipe clenched between his teeth. At last his ponderings reduced themselves to a single fact. Mackenzie was the insurmountable wall. What to do with him?

His mind slipped into a consideration of his financial and business dealings with the man. Did they offer a solution? The thought of the partnership made him bristle. He loathed the coupling of his name with Mackenzie's. The memory of their relations roused all his hurt bitterness.

He knew that he could still raise the

loan at the Sawpits bank and could probably buy out Mackenzie. But that scheme led nowhere. It would merely release the latter from financial entanglements and leave him free to disappear as he pleased. And this was the last thing that Bream intended to bring about. To buy him out and turn him over to the authorities was equally impossible. Either way Eloise must suffer.

A long time he paced and pondered. His pipe went out, but he did not notice it. The smell of cooking had commenced to permeate the house as noon approached, but he was oblivious to it as he was oblivious to the bright, hot sun that made oblong patches on the floor or the sounds that came in through the open windows.

At last, between the rocks of unhappiness that existed for Eloise on either hand, he discovered a narrow, tortuous channel of action. The girl should stay in Hampton during the winter and teach school as once they had laughingly proposed, and he would take upon himself the burden of Mackenzie.

The partnership should stand—he wretched in momentary revolt—but under a new agreement that should bind Mackenzie hand and foot. Once in the virgin forest, a hundred miles from civilization, the rascal's fangs would be drawn. Watched, unable to escape, he would be helpless. Then, thrown back, perforce, upon honesty, he would be forced to an honest effort or else risk the loss of the little capital he had left in the world.

It was a bitter cup for Bream, but with the thought of Eloise like sweet music in his heart he lifted it almost eagerly to his lips. What the future might bring forth he did not try to fathom. The present bore sufficient heartache of its own.

The next morning, doubly resolved upon this course by reflection, he set off across the village to Mrs. Barry's. It was a perfect day, with a brilliant, hot sun and a glowing, blue sky, in which long, light clouds like snowy fleeces hung stationary above the green hilltops. It was a day to lift the heart with secret exultation, and Bream's heart thrilled to the mood. Yesterday seemed a thousand years ago, the panic and passion of his discovery some eldritch nightmare through which his love for Eloise sang clearly, like a prescience of the divine. Life to him was sadder, but it was sweeter.

Bream waited, standing in the little parlor while Mrs. Barry trudged up-stairs to announce him. The place acted on him with an almost psychic force. He loathed it. So much had gone out of and come into his life in that room. It vibrated still with a hundred emotions. Some such pressure seemed to have exerted itself on Eloise's mind also, for, seeing him there as she came down the stairs, she exclaimed: "Oh, let's not talk in that awful place! Let's get out into the sun."

By way of greeting the two men nodded briefly, Mackenzie's eyes falling before Bream's. Yet, as they took chairs on the porch, Bream thought that he appeared much his former self, cool and indifferent.

Without a tremor Mackenzie cut to the heart of matters with his question: "Well, what do you mean to do?"

Bream explained slowly, carefully, attributing his decision to different motives than those which had actually influenced him. He watched Mackenzie's face as he talked and saw the color creep back into it when he learned that he was once more to escape the punishment of the law.

After that first glance Allan did not once look at his whilom partner. His eyes rested either absently upon the cracked, paintless flooring of the porch or wistfully upon his wife's composed face. Despite his apparent self-possession, he seemed alive to the effect upon her of Bream's every word. He observed her like a criminal studying his judge, scarcely interested in what went on around him except as it affected her. Only his eyes spoke, and this morning, as several times before, Bream found in them that yearning, wistful expression that betrayed Mackenzie's one strong emotion. In turn they expressed pleading, remorse, despair.

Curious, a little revolted, Bream studied this anomaly in the man's nature, this worshiping, doglike affection that was the more intense because of its lack of conformity with his normal impulses. Knowing him aright now, Bream would have said that half the charm and comradeship he presented to the world was based upon cold-blooded calculation and control. But not in the case of Eloise. He was blatantly genuine there, so much so that if he had not been abject, he would have been pitiful.

As to the girl, she shut the light of her face from her husband's starving eyes, not

in punishment, but in shame. She could not look at him, although her solemn gaze lifted now and then to Bream's as he talked. To him she seemed an exquisitely fair penitent, though, Heaven knew, she had nothing to repent. Her lustrous, heavy hair was parted in the middle and swept back in graceful curves on either side. She wore a simple, grayish-blue morning dress, and this, with the sensitive sadness of her clearly chiseled features, seemed to intensify her twilight mood.

"This afternoon," Bream concluded, "I'll bring Joe Sturgis around here and we'll sign up some new partnership papers that I wrote out yesterday."

Eloise, scarcely believing she heard aright after the threats of the day before, studied his clear gaze silently for a moment.

"Oh, Dick!" she cried at last, overwhelmed. "You *are* good! It means you will take Allan back!"

Even Mackenzie's face showed an amazed expression for an instant. This sudden change of front puzzled him also, but he said nothing.

"On my own terms, yes," Bream turned to Mackenzie. "Your money is in the business, and I want it to stay there. I'm not going to buy you out, because that would turn you loose on the country—something that will never happen so long as I live. Up in the woods there'll be plenty to do, and you will have to scratch like the rest of us if you don't want to go bankrupt. As a matter of fact, you *can't* go bankrupt, for I've fixed it in the papers so that if I find you trying to ruin me again I get your money and you have no come-back. The firm has *got* to make good, if it's in human possibility.

"Now you, Eloise, will stay here in Hampton and teach school, as we thought of once before. I have spoken to Dr. Cavanaugh about it, and you can appear before the supervisors for examination any time you are ready. When we come down in the spring—well, we'll cross that bridge when we get to it."

"What's this?" asked Mackenzie, suddenly sitting erect. He had not spoken before during the interview. "Eloise stay here and teach school while I go up there in that God-forsaken hole for ten or eleven months?" His voice rose heatedly. "I won't do it! I won't be separated from my wife, the only thing in God's world I

care for. I won't do it, I tell you! Either Eloise goes or I don't."

The quick, passionate defiance, something he had not suspected in Mackenzie, startled Bream. It was like the outbreak of savage, maternal instinct in some cowed animal. He paused a moment.

"Didn't you tell him about this?" he asked Eloise.

"No, I forgot," she said apologetically.

"I meant to a dozen times."

Then the unreasonableness of the demand struck Bream. "Can't you see it's impossible for her to go with you?" he asked sharply. "She can't live all winter in a place like that!"

"Why not? She has done it before."

"But, Allan," cried the girl, "not a lumber camp. With all those men—Don't you see I ought to stay down here?"

"No, you oughtn't, and I won't have it, that's all. Either you go or I don't," he repeated.

Bream mastered an angry desire to override the man's selfishness and reflected. Should Mackenzie persist, he would face the alternatives either of turning him over to the authorities or of taking him by force, neither desirable courses. Unintentionally Mackenzie had disarmed him. Refusing to continue the argument further, he rose.

"You have until this afternoon to settle this," he said with finality, "but there's one thing you needn't forget, Allan. Whatever Eloise does, you go up to the Y with me."

When he had gone Mackenzie turned to his wife.

"I don't know what's made Bream swing around like this since yesterday," he said, with one of his quick changes to sullen command, "but I know I'm not going to have you hanging around here all winter. You know too much, and there are too many people in this country that know who you are. Either you go with me or the game's up now. I'd sooner be alone in a real jail than condemned to hard labor up in that hell-hole with nobody but that slave-driver."

Eloise sat silent. After all, what did it matter where she was, since this was all life held out to her? Better, perhaps, to freeze in a mud-chinked cabin than teach young urchins honor and truth and right. At least there was less irony in it.

For a long time she tried to think, her

mind stunned by the blows that had fallen upon it. Then, finally, she said: "Very well, I'll go, Allan."

CHAPTER XI

TIMBER

"Ti-i-mbe-e-r!"

The long, high-pitched call rang melodiously down the forest aisles until it faded away in the distance. Then there sounded a staccato *crack!* A number of men with axes who had been slashing in the brush drew off quickly to one side as the tall, straight spruce shivered almost humanly and began to move.

"All right, Bill!" cried one of two men who stood on opposite sides of the trunk, a silver ribbon of saw between them. Bill unhooked his handle of the saw and the other drew the blade out with a metallic twang.

The almost imperceptible stirring of the tree changed gradually to a slow falling motion that had almost the appearance of control. The two sawyers backed away, their eyes gaging the direction of the imminent sweep downward. There came a swift crescendo of snapping and cracking and the sound of rending wood. As the top gathered speed there was a faint hissing that increased to a whistling rush of wind. Branches snapped, limbs from nearby trees were shorn away; there was a sense of breathlessness, as if some cataclysm were about to occur.

Crash! A rending of second growth and underbrush, a flash of naked, yellow wounds, a springy recoil from the earth, and the tree was down. Instantly the air was filled with dust and leaves and twigs, a murky cloud that settled slowly.

Pierre, lithe and cat-quick, leaped through the fog upon the prostrate body, and now his double-bitted ax lopped off limbs swiftly, surely, the steel glinting above his head. The other axmen moved forward again to their work of "swamping" or clearing a narrow travoy road down which to haul the logs.

Pierre worked with extraordinary speed and skill, swinging his ax from difficult angles and positions equally well with one or two hands, the implement seeming almost a part of his body. Almost as if by the divesting of a garment, the tapering figure of the tree appeared, giving Bill and

his companion opportunity for measuring the various log lengths.

"Ti-i-mbe-e-r!"

The call, musical and mellow with distance, seemed a sound of unreal beauty amid an orgy of destruction. From the right it came, then from the left, then ahead, always followed, a moment later, by the distant crash and thump of the shattering death.

In the little clearings the sun beat down warmly, distilling the fragrance of the fresh-cut boughs and wet, yellow chips. In the untouched reaches it filtered through the dark tree-tops, mottling the hazel and tamarack and tangled berry-bushes, and glinting now and then from the back of some flickering bird. In the deeper recesses, where the cutting was inaudible, primeval quiet reigned, quiet broken only by the snap of a twig or the rustle of some invisible creature, the saucy chatter of a squirrel, or an outbreak in some feathered family. September lingered pleasant and sunny, as though summer were loath to draw in her outposts of warmth for the retreat south.

Presently there sounded a loud, steady crashing and swish of underbrush, accompanied by human voices in discussion, and two men broke through a hazel thicket into a natural clearing. One was tall and broad-shouldered, a man of great strength, while the other, though of good height, was more slim, almost dapper-looking. Both were dressed for the woods in flannel shirts, felt hats, "stagged" trousers, and high, heavy boots.

Arrived in the clearing, the larger man glanced about him, as if seeking familiar signs, and then halted the other.

"This is the place, Allan," he said. "You can see the blaze-marks I made last spring. This should be the end of the logging road from the west branch. Another year and we'll drive it diagonally down again to the east branch. Like this." He drew pencil and note-book from his pocket and sketched roughly. "The Y is a triangle pointed head downward, and our logging roads will make another triangle pointed head up into the Y. Over here, a little to the west of the center, is the camp."

"H-m! The boys missed the middle a little when they built, didn't they?"

"Yes, but not much. It is near enough so that we can cut for both branches from

it." Bream touched up his sketch by adding many twisting lines leading into the logging road.

"These here are the travoy roads," he explained, "and lead to the skidways, or places where the logs are piled alongside the main road. When the snow comes we'll break up the skidway and haul the logs to the river."

Mackenzie was silent for a minute.

"Considerable job, all told, isn't it?" he said dryly.

"Yes, but it's a *great* job!" cried Bream, his voice ringing, though his face did not change. "It's the kind of a job that will make us or break us. We're in for a fight here that will go to a finish. It's all a question of whether nature gets us or we get nature."

A faint color stole into Mackenzie's face as he said: "Well, she'll have to go some to put us on the mat!"

Bream looked quickly at his "partner," as if he had not heard aright. This was the first flicker of interest in the business that Allan had displayed since coming to the woods the month before, and Bream wondered if his sullen indifference had broken at last. The emphasis on the "us" seemed to imply an awakening concern in his enforced partnership.

"We're *bound* to win if we know we can't be beaten," answered Bream with conviction, "and I for one know we can't. By Heaven, I *won't* be!"

"Well, if you feel that way about it, I guess you won't," growled Mackenzie, suddenly convinced of the impossibility of failure by the other's combative assurance. "Let's go back."

Without a word Bream turned and took the almost invisible trail, Allan following him.

It had been a hard month for Dick, a month of work-filled days and half-sleepless nights over which Mackenzie had hovered darkly, a *bête noire* to thought and sight. Sullen, stolid, icily indifferent, he had come into the Y with Eloise and taken up his new life like a prisoner, dully and full of hatred. So far he had not done an hour's work in the interests of the firm, nor had he given the slightest indication that he intended doing one. Hatefully acquiescent to Bream's every suggestion, he had accompanied him on proposed tours of inspection or exploration only to keep up the illusion of partnership before the

men. With them, as usual, he was on friendly terms.

Faced with this spirit, Bream refused to yield an inch from his intention. He had not a thought in his mind of Mackenzie as a partner except in so far as concerned the spending of the firm's resources. He considered him an utterly impossible associate from all standpoints, yet scarcely allowed him out of his sight. He had made his vow, and he intended to keep it.

Of all this Mackenzie suspected nothing. In dealing with him, Bream assumed a crisp, businesslike manner and address that was tinged with friendliness and consideration, but never overstepped a certain mark of reserve. He consulted Mackenzie in all matters pertaining to the firm and the work and maintained scrupulously before the men the air of harmonious partnership. In this Mackenzie's pride abetted him.

In Bream's mind the past was like a closed book, except for the one perfect page that had fluttered against his heart and clung there. His was not a nature that rehearsed and cherished the evil he had suffered in mind or body from the hands of others. He lived too much in the present and future to grow morbid over the unhappiness of the past, and he had put Mackenzie out of his life as much as constant proximity would permit.

Yet often, despite this strength of purpose and resolution, doubt would assail him, and he would ask himself how long he could endure the strain. Sometimes he feared that Mackenzie's weak spirit had been utterly broken by those terrible days at Hampton and wondered how it would all end. But in this Eloise one day, quite by accident, comforted him.

"Have patience," she counseled. "I think this is the temper of a spoiled child."

Bream had had patience, inexhaustible patience, and yet until to-day Mackenzie had not varied his attitude by the width of an eyelash. Bream grasped at the faint sign like a drowning man at a straw.

After five minutes' hard going through the tangle, over windfallen trees and across rough gullies, the two broke suddenly upon a gang with a team engaged in building the last furlong of logging road. The men variously at work clearing brush, felling trees, stumping, or grading, looked up and nodded to the partners, while the lumber-jack in charge stepped up for a word.

In the presence of work Bream became another being. His eyes observed every detail with lightning rapidity, there was an uncompromising set to his mouth, he spoke brusquely and with very few words. Now for half a minute he estimated the progress of the present job, taking into consideration the fact that the road must be almost as smooth and level as a boulevard.

"Fine-looking road, Joe," he said, "but not enough of it done. Anything the matter?" It was smiling criticism, but required unequivocal satisfaction.

Joe, an elderly man, wiped his forehead with his red bandanna and took a fresh chew of "black-strap."

"One or two of the boys says the axes ain't quite what they ought to be," he replied with blunt honesty.

"Who says so?"

Joe indicated a young fellow who was grubbing in the brush at the side of the road. Bream walked over to him.

"What's the matter, Jules; your ax no good?"

"Yeh, no good." The French-Canadian, his face flushed, stood sullenly studying the ground.

"Let's see it." Bream took the instrument from the other and examined it.

"You've been trying to chop out rocks with it," he stated, noting the nicked edge. Then, looking again at the other's face, he immediately saw where the trouble lay, and his eyes hardened.

"Where's the whisky you've got?" he asked brusquely.

"Whisky? I no have any."

"Oh, yes you have," Bream insisted, still pleasantly. "Give it to me."

For an instant Jules met the unwavering glance that pierced him and slowly produced the flask from his hip-pocket. Bream took it and smashed it on a rock at the edge of the road.

"Go into camp and Barry will give you your time," he said. "You've worked for me before, and you know my rules. You've disobeyed them, and I don't want you here."

The man's face darkened with rebellion, but another glance at the inflexible, waiting boss cooled him. He turned away down the road. Bream watched him a moment, and then spoke to the others.

"What's the matter here, boys?" he asked crisply. "You don't want Joe's

gang to be called the soldiers in the camp, do you? This isn't the kind of work you do for me. I realize this is a dirty job, but the faster you move the sooner it will be over."

"All right, boss, we're on," said one of the men, and spat copiously on his hands.

Bream grinned. "Let it go at that, boys," he said, and turned down the road, Mackenzie following.

For a while they walked in silence. Then the latter cleared his throat.

"Look here," he said, "I'm supposed to be a partner in this business, but I don't know the first thing about the work. Already I've had some of the men ask me questions I couldn't answer, and I think that's bad for everybody concerned. Now that we're one hand short, what do you think of my getting out with an ax with that road-making gang to-morrow?"

For a few minutes Bream did not speak. The surrender had come so suddenly that he could not formulate a reply. Its first effect on him was one of inexpressible relief, but this he could not express.

"You don't think it would hurt discipline to have one of the owners working with the men?" he parried.

"You do it," was the reply. "You can do more than any man in camp."

"That's why I work with them sometimes."

"I see," said Mackenzie reflectively. "You mean I'll have to do the same?"

"Not necessarily with your muscle," replied Bream, thinking of the other's slighter build. "You have the advantage of brains over most of these men, and there is where you can prove your superiority. That's what gave me my start."

"I see. I hadn't thought of that. I think I'll do it."

"It will be a big help," admitted Bream, and the subject was dropped.

An eighth of a mile from where the gang was working the road turned sharply to the right, passed between projecting rocks, and without warning revealed the camp, a cluster of rough log shacks in a flat oval two hundred yards long and a hundred wide. On both sides heavily wooded hills rose quickly to a height of three hundred feet, closing in at each end to the width of the logging road.

The buildings, ten in number, and of varying sizes, stood at the sides of the road, seven to the left and three to the

right. They were constructed entirely of birch logs, and owing to the fact that here and there the banded bark had peeled away, there was an effect at a little distance of alternate silver and gold. The yawning chinks in the walls had been effectually closed by driving narrow wedges of wood between the logs and daubing the remaining apertures with cement plaster. The roofs, supported in each case by a huge tree for a ridge-pole, were covered with black roofing-paper. Very dirty, square, ill-fitted windows, divided into four panes, peered from the walls like white-rimmed eyes, and a stovepipe protruded above every roof.

As Bream and Mackenzie entered the camp an old, bent man hobbled out of the stable, an empty pail in each hand. His face was deeply graven and his eyes bleary, but a Roman nose and straight forehead gave him an indefinable look of distinction.

"Well, Jimmie," said Bream, "how are Lil and Lazy?"

"Coming on finely, thank you, Mr. Bream," replied the other in startlingly perfect English. "They should be able to go to work by the day after to-morrow at the latest."

"Thank you, Jimmie."

"Not at all, Mr. Bream, not at all." He passed on with the air of one who had done a favor.

"Funny old boy," mused Mackenzie. "Notice the 'side' of him? You'd think he had hired you instead of his having to chore around camp like a cook's helper."

"Yes, poor devil, but I always let him think so. He taught in Eton once, and this is where drink has landed him. If you feel like mental gymnastics, some dull day tackle Jimmie and get a surprise."

A long-drawn, girlish halloo reached their ears, and out from a little cabin near the north end of the camp Eloise came running to meet them. Now, as on the day Bream had seen her first, she was dressed in yellow buckskin, soft and fine as chamois, a material that clung gently to her figure. A fringe of porcupine quills, dyed blue, clicked and moved about her neck, and similar ornaments at her wrists, many-hued, gave a touch of color. She came toward them looking like some native creature of the forests, walking silently now with long, graceful strides, in her moccasin-soled oil tans.

"Oh, to be a boss!" she cried gaily,

"and stop work in the middle of the afternoon!"

"Listen to that, Dick," said Allan, with a sudden return to his old-time friendliness. "I wonder who *is* the boss of this camp, eh?"

"Yes," said Bream, his eye twinkling upon Eloise, "I *wonder* who is."

"Oh, well, now—" protested that young lady aggrievedly. "You're both conspiring against me, and—and making fun of me, for all my good works. I shall tell the cook!"

"Then we might as well give up first as last," grinned Allan, slipping his arm around her.

"And what has come over you, my lord," she asked him bluntly, "that you are in these unwonted spirits?"

"I'm going to work to-morrow," he told her, "with an ax in a road-making gang. What do you think of that?"

Taken aback, she stared at him in silent surprise for a moment. Then, seeing he was serious, she met his mood.

"I think it is splendid," she said. "I'm so glad." A little later she turned to Dick. "By the way, one of the men just went in to see Barry. Is he quitting?"

"Fired," was the laconic reply. "Been drinking whisky all day."

"And I'm taking his place," put in Allan. "I figured I couldn't be much of a boss here until I learned a little of the business."

A lightning glance of understanding and relief that said "At last!" passed between Bream and the girl.

Both of them had been under a great strain, and for her sake he was doubly glad that this had come, for he knew that Allan had made her suffer much during the last month. Knew it by instinct, for no hint of it had come from her.

They walked toward the north end of the camp, passing the blacksmith's shop, with its glowing forge, and the shack where the teamsters slept apart from the other men. Next came the long, low combination bunk-house, dining-room, and kitchen, and opposite to it the storehouse. Beyond, in a group, were the wash-house, office, and the little one-room shack that the Mackenzies occupied.

The cook, Pete Rolfe, a gaunt, loose-hung young man whose vaulting ambition was to become a dentist, leaned against the door-frame of his sanctum and inquired

as to the defection of Jules. His air of easy familiarity symbolized the exalted nature of his position in camp. Bream divulged the few details briefly and then entered the office, where a warring of loud voices had already proclaimed that the Canuck was in the process of getting his "time."

CHAPTER XII

THE CENTER OF THE WORLD

At sunset the men tramped in from the woods, dirty, weary, and famished. With them came the big horses, clumping heavily, chains clinking along the ground behind them. While the teamsters turned in to the stable, the saw-gangs, swampers, and road-makers continued on to the bunk-house, where they passed over their huge dinner-baskets to the cookee before washing up. There was, then, a pleasant sound of water, and presently, with hair plastered and hands partially scoured, they sat about on the pile of *chicots* outside the kitchen awaiting the appearance of the cook and his bell. Upon the first note they rose as a man and moved silently through the door to their places at the long trestle tables.

Up and down behind them Pete Rolfe and his young assistants moved ceaselessly, answering a call here, anticipating one there, expediting the consumption of fuel by the human engine.

For twenty minutes the world ceased to be for these men. Then here and there one rose with a sigh, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand and reaching for his plug and pipe. In five minutes they were leaving through the bunk-house door in twos and threes, and in ten the place was clear.

Then while the cookees set several places afresh, the cook clanged his bell a second time and the aristocracy entered: Bream, Barry, and the Mackenzies. With naive equality the cook sat down with them, but the cookees carried their heaped plates to another table.

For Eloise there were thick china and plated silver set out always by Rolfe personally, this being but one of his efforts in her behalf. Another, more difficult, was his attempt at the proper mastery of a fork, he having been assured by her, upon inquiry, that this was an accomplishment common to dentists.

To-night she was gay for the first time since coming north, her eyes sparkling and her cheeks brilliant. And Bream, studying her, told himself that this was reaction—her relief at Allan's surrender bubbling up in excitement.

"We're going to have a musicale to-night," she announced suddenly, stirring the cup of tea she had sweetened with brown sugar.

"Not that jew's-harp fellow again!" protested Allan.

"No, dear, a virtuoso this time, Edward O'Duffy and his accordion. He has promised to teach me to play if I like it."

"H-m!" said Bream accusingly, "I see now why you have mended the poor chap's gloves and socks and things so earnestly. I've watched you bristling with curiosity over that accordion every time the boys have had a dance in the bunk-house. And now you're going to see it for yourself! Well! Well!"

"And didn't you have to bribe the jew's-harp player by writing a letter home or something before he brought his instrument of torture around?" inquired Allan.

Barry, the clerk and scaler, a little timid man with gray hair and iron-bowed spectacles, no sense of humor, and not the slightest conception of all this fooling, set the blundering heel of fact upon the flower of fancy.

"Yes'm, pardon me, ma'am, you did write that letter, Mrs. Mackenzie," he said seriously, "I remember it plain because Bert come an' bought the stamp off me 'bout five o'clock in the evenin' a week ago Sunday—or was it five ten? I'm not sure."

"Why, so I did, now that you call it to mind, Mr. Barry," said Eloise, careful of the little man's feelings. "Thank you so much. Bert's jew's-harp was jolly."

"If you aren't careful, mothering these big brutes," remarked Bream with an amused grin, "they'll get up a comb band and hold rehearsals when they ought to be cutting timber. You mustn't spoil them."

At which Eloise called upon Pete Rolfe for protection and brought an incongruous blush to the tanned cheek of that willing champion.

Bream had spent an evening in the Mackenzie cabin but three times during the past month, each occasion being one of policy. For his part Allan had often joined the long, rambling talks in the office

with which the camp leaders passed the evenings.

To-night he urged Bream's presence in the cabin while O'Duffy played, a friendly advance with a flavor of the old Hampton days. His resolution to work seemed to have brought back his spirits. For the first time he laughed and displayed some of the charm that was native in him. All but Bream were captivated. For him the tone of the bell rang as false as ever and he was convinced that it always would.

The Mackenzie cabin was like all the others except that it was more snugly and carefully built. It consisted of one large room, some twenty feet square, with one door and one window in front and two windows on each side. It was the only shack with an attempt at a ceiling. A squat, round stove occupied the exact center of it and the two bunks and wardrobe built against the back wall had been curtained off.

"Deacon seat" benches, chairs made from stumps and half-barrels, and a solid pine table holding a lamp, completed the furniture. Two other small lamps hung in brackets one on each side of the room.

Up to this point matter-of-fact man had been responsible. Now ingenious woman stepped in. On wires strung above the window-frame Eloise had hung white curtains, tied back with red ribbons. Against one wall was a shelf upon which stood a dozen books, most of them Bream's, a few of her own. Colored pictures, cut from magazines and framed in cambric-covered cardboard were tacked up here and there. A work-bag, bulging with male apparel, hung on a nail behind the door. A kettle whined on the top of the stove and tea things could be seen on another shelf. The table bore a pile of out-of-date magazines, writing materials and photographs of Eloise's parents preserved in worn, red-morocco frames.

Plain and rough as everything was, her touch and personality were everywhere evident. One felt instinctively on entering that thought and care had been lavished here for very love of doing.

As might be expected under the circumstances Edward O'Duffy came for his formal performance abashed and unnerved. Whereas in the company of his own he could stir the brogans of the dead, here he blundered and sweated and made such

a job of things that Bream finally interposed to save him.

"You're rotten, Ed!" he remarked disgustedly. "You ought to be thrown in the river. Get out!"

And the wretched lumber-jack, thankful for this dismissal, backed toward the door.

"The bhoys wanted me to sa-ay," he announced timorously, his hand on the latch, "that there's a game of bean-bags in the bunk-house to-night."

"Oh, there is, eh?" said Mackenzie, his face lighting up with interest. "Tell them I'll be over."

"Yis, sor," and O'Duffy disappeared.

"Bean-bags?" inquired Eloise, wrinkling her forehead.

"Yes, so to speak," explained Bream. "Poker with beans from a sack as chips each worth a plug of tobacco."

"Like the goat meat hunters bring in when it is the closed season for deer," supplemented Mackenzie drolly, rising. "I'll be back in an hour, Dick. Amuse Eloise, will you?"

"If it's possible after the collapse of her musicale."

"I don't know that it is," she sniffed, pouting, and added as an afterthought, "unless you let me beat you at checkers."

"I'll try," Bream answered so humbly that they all laughed.

Except for a few minutes now and then in the daytime Bream had not been alone with Eloise since coming to the Y, and he had blessed this circumstance, for it had made the task he had set himself regarding her much easier.

Yet not one moment of his waking hours had love left him. Every action, every thought seemed colored by it. The bright, blue, sunny days tingled with the joy of it; the gloom of twilight and the regret for summer's passing were full of its sweet melancholy. The realization, gentle and holy, fed upon itself—a steady flame upon a sacrificial altar; a vestal flame that needed no tending lest it die out.

Now Mackenzie in his desire to make amends for the past month was forcing things back upon their old footing of free and easy comradeship, a footing dangerous and difficult for Bream with regard to the girl; a footing he had no desire to regain with regard to the man.

The action was typical of Allan's character. Selfish, seemingly unaware of the

finer distinctions of feeling, he imagined that now that he had admitted the untenability of his attitude, everything would go on swimmingly as it had before.

"What happened to Allan to-day?"

Eloise advanced the left red man in her first row in the approved manner of checker attack.

Bream told her, at the same time duplicating the move with his black.

"I'm glad; things will be better now."

"I hope so. I want to see how long this enthusiasm for work lasts before I make any predictions."

"Jump, Dick, you've got to jump."

"Oh, by George, I'd forgotten." With a loud groan he obeyed and laid himself open to a loss of two men which were triumphantly captured. "Why can't I see more than a move ahead!" he growled ferociously.

"Now that he has changed, I think Allan will do his share," she said gravely. "You have been good and patient with him, Dick."

"Oh, no." He laughed lightly and riveted his attention upon his pieces. "I've been too busy to indulge in any of the Christian virtues, I assure you. Ah, now, you must jump—oh, heavens! Where are my brains? Three! This isn't a defeat, it's a rout."

"King, please," she crowed. "Wait till he gets out among your Africans."

A rising wind swept roaring through the trees on the enclosing hills, making more cozy by contrast the crackling wood fire in the round-bellied stove. A great shout and laughter from the bunk-house indicated a *coup* at "bean-bags." An occasional rattle of utensils or bang of a bread-box cover told that the kitchen force was packing the dinner baskets for the next day.

For a few minutes they played in silence, Bream contriving to make a villainous move now and then calculated to establish the genuineness of his efforts.

"Do you know," she said impulsively, "I think I am going to be happy here this winter, happier than I have been for a long, long time."

Bream left his single black king to the mercy of surrounding red foes and looked at her quizzically.

"Do you know," he said slowly after a moment, "that, in spite of everything, I can never think of you as unhappy. It

must be something you surround yourself with, an atmosphere you create that gives me that impression. Whatever it is, I am glad you expect to be genuinely happy here, for that relieves my conscience. I've been wanting a long time to apologize for dragging you off to this hole, when you might now be fairly comfortable in Hampton teaching urchins." He laughed and absently moved his rex into a "pair of breeches."

"Please believe that I don't regret the urchins one bit," she said. "I think perhaps some of these men here need me more than they do if it comes to that."

"They worship you already," he said gently.

"I'm glad, but after all that's not the real reason I'm happy—oh, how can I explain so you will understand? Can you imagine what it is to me to *know* that at last I can live among other people without shame? That *he* is helpless? That I am free from the awful dread and suspicion that hung over me day and night before? Can you conceive what this"—she looked about the rough room—"means to me? The first real home I have had in years? A home that I'm not afraid to live in? Now do you see why I'm going to be happy?"

With hands clasped in her lap she questioned him passionately, her eyes eager for understanding, her lips parted. Forgotten was the merry and triumphant campaign on the checker-board.

Bream shut his teeth and clenched them. Every word she spoke, every action, stirred the flame in him. He had not realized that she could make it quite so hard. Was it that he had overestimated his strength or that he had underestimated her effect on him? Angered at his weakness he ground down the words that rose to his lips, grim determination settling upon his face.

"Yes, I see," he replied gruffly. "I'm glad you can be happy. You've certainly earned a little happiness."

She looked at him quickly, drawn by the tone of his voice, intuitively aware that some change had come over him. She saw the shadow on his averted face and her own slowly lost its girlish, eager brilliance. She remembered her words, impulsive, almost intimate; words that for them both had raised up images of the past crisis. And a thought came to her vaguely that

perhaps she had blundered, had assumed too much—that never again could he be quite the same to her, just as he never could be the same with Allan.

Still, even so, there was a duty to be done, a duty due both to him and to herself. He must know that she had not been blind then, though she had been dumb. Hesitatingly she said:

"I want you to know, Dick, that I owe my—this happiness to you. Because the—the other punishment would have broken my heart. You brought Allan up here. Don't think I didn't know. Just to say I am—grateful—well, I could never tell how grateful I am."

He raised his hand abruptly to stop her, but she went on as if she had not seen: "That—that was something; it helped in a sort of physical way, but it wasn't all—I was sick then, sick inside—in my soul. Can you understand? And just to know that a man lived who would do that—for me—*then!* It brought me back from the valley, Dick. That is why I am happy. And I am happier now that you know."

"Don't! Please don't!" he pleaded tensely, turning swiftly toward her. Then with an effort, he mastered the feeling in his voice and assumed a lighter tone. "Really, you will spoil me as badly as you do the rest of the boys. I deeply appreciate what you have said"—the flat banality sounded oppressive—"and I ask nothing more than to— Oh, thunder!"

Shifting in his chair as his nervous tension relaxed, one of his knees, upon which half the checker-board rested, twitched violently. In an instant disaster followed. Kings were uncrowned and their followers, as though dismayed by the fact, tobogganed ignobly from their places in inextricable confusion. Eloise completed the rout with a sudden movement to check it. They looked at each other for a moment in dismay and suddenly burst out laughing like children.

"Just when I was winning!" she cried reproachfully. "You just *wouldn't* let a woman beat you."

"Apparently I am the peak of perversity," he admitted, "but truly I couldn't help it. My guardian angel must have nudged me at the psychological moment."

"Well," she said, rising, "if you will collect the fallen warriors I will make some tea. And even if you were ungallant, perhaps I'll give you some jam."

He groped about under the table, calling attention to his unparalleled industry and demanding jam in proportion.

Afterward he went over to the kitchen and "hooked" a pie in quite the approved manner.

When all was ready Eloise looked at the clock.

"It's past the hour. I wonder if Allan is coming?"

"Let's wait a few minutes, anyway."

They waited and presently Mackenzie arrived flushed, excited, and visibly brightened by the possession of a handful of navy beans. He joined the others, bursting with the details of the game.

"By George, those shanty men know a little about a poker hand, Dick! And there's no reading them, either. Secretive as clams. I tried bluffing on a pair of aces once and that jew's-harp fellow—McGee—trimmed me to the queen's taste. After that I was careful. Um! Good pie, this. Pass the sugar please, Dick. But the best pot I landed was on a straight flush. Borwell opened and three of us were in, he and I and Bill, one of the sawyers. Borwell thought he'd had enough in about a minute and dropped out, but Bill stuck. I knew he must have something pretty good because he borrowed to back it, and yet I knew he would have to show four aces or a royal to take the money. Well, sir, we raised it about as high as the roof and everybody in the bunk-house got interested. Men got out of bed to see the finish. And what do you think was the show-down? We both had straights, jacks up, only mine was diamonds and his spades. You ought to have heard the yell that went up when the boys saw what had happened! Poor Bill won't smoke for a year."

"I think we did hear it," said Bream with polite interest, unconsciously feeling the intrusion of a new atmosphere. Then he rose watch in hand. "Half past nine. This is awful. I must be going."

"By the way, Dick, I told Joe I would be in his gang to-morrow."

"All right. I'll happen around about ten o'clock to see how you're getting on. But take my advice and be careful. Don't be ambitious till you learn to use your ax. A cut foot or leg may lame you for life."

"Trust me, Dick. Recklessness is poor economy, especially when you are one of the owners. Well, good night."

Bream closed the door after him and bent forward against the boisterous wind that swept through the little camp. He walked about quickly from building to building, satisfying himself that all was safe, a self-imposed nightly habit remaining over from his days in the Burchard & Hill camps.

At last he turned toward the office—in which he slept—and, as he lifted his hand to the latch, his eyes unconsciously sought out the Mackenzie cabin. The front window had not yet been darkened by the buckskin curtain and it glowed, a yellow square against the darkness, throwing a rectangle of gold upon the ground. Through it could be dimly seen the rough walls, a spot of color here and there that was a picture, and the glistening mass of Eloise's hair as she sat by the table reading.

He raised his eyes slowly and saw the dim edge of the hills vaguely tossing against the star-sprinkled sky. The mighty diapason of the wilderness roared in his ears. The brandishing trees, the virile, primitive woods, the sky, the stars! What magnificence was there! What mysterious dignity of unexplained creation! What illimitable, unimaginable distances leading out and up through ethereal essence to God himself, perhaps!

It was a moment for a Shelley to feel and to interpret. Bream found it all a meaningless jumble to-night. His eyes dropped down again to the cabin window, and suddenly he knew that that yellow square meant more to him than anything on the earth, or above the earth or in all the interstellar spaces that have stimulated faith or imagination since man was.

She was there in a place the size of a square rood, near him in the flesh as in the spirit, unapproachable as a veiled deity, forbidden even to his thoughts, but yet there.

The splendors of God's firmament, all silver and black in the flowing river of the wind, became as naught to him, for he knew that he stood at the center of the world.

CHAPTER XIII

OF LABOR AND A RED MUFFLER

WHEN Allan Mackenzie had been swinging an ax for some three hours the next

morning he suddenly found himself face to face with an urgent problem. How could he quit and keep his face in camp?

Quitting seemed then the most desirable of all life's blessings. His hands flamed with new-raised blisters, his knees trembled, and he felt as if some one had broken him in two across the small of the back; every motion caused him agony. His mind was filled with a haze of pain and he looked forward to noon as Saint Lawrence on the grill must have looked forward to paradise.

How to quit and yet save his face?

It couldn't be done, he found, after many attempts to make such a proceeding plausible; especially since he had told Joe confidentially in the beginning that it would be better discipline if he showed him, Allan, no favors. And yet— Under the torture his mind evolved many ingenious evasions of this order, much after the manner of a Moor on the rack in 1574 A.D. when quizzed regarding his private beliefs. But under the heartless scrutiny of the Inquisition, in this case a certain wiry pride of place and mental superiority, they were found wanting and the screw went blithely over another turn.

Mackenzie shrank from physical punishment. Extremely sensitive and high-strung when a boy, he had been blunderingly subjected to a rigorous education that had branded him forever with a fear of pain. His lying and deceiving in petty wrong-doings at that time to escape punishment had really laid the foundations of his evil career. Parents, take notice! But on the other hand, he was of good stock and had inbred in him through generations the toplofty British attitude toward persons of lower social standing—which Joe and the shanty men now unquestionably represented. Could he in self-respect yield before them?

These were the forces that warred in the wretched man's soul during that endless day, and be it said to the credit of his pig-headed English ancestors that he stuck it out to the end. Then, carrying his ax, he stumbled home on feet that had lost all feeling and rolled into his bunk.

"I stuck it out, Ellie," he told his wife with that familiar wistful look, as if he had secretly hoped to please her. And she, a little surprised at his endurance, warmed the cockles of his far from stout heart with sincere praise.

That night he divided the time between sleeping in snatches and kneading out cramps that twisted his overstrained muscles into agonizing knots all over his body. With morning came the awful prospect of the day in the woods, and his resolution wavered.

"Damn it, if I was a hand I'd get my time," he thought. "But I'm an owner and I can't. What was the use of sticking it out yesterday if I was going to quit to-day? Oh, Lord, I can hardly move! Oh, Lord! But I'll stick it out for an hour. They say the first hour is the worst—Ugh! my hands."

They were blistered and red and sore and the fingers were curled tightly so that he had to straighten them out separately. Even then he could scarcely hold them open. When he touched an ax-handle it felt as if he had grasped a hot iron. His calked boots were stiff with sweat and he could hardly put them on. Every movement he made was acute torture.

Bream, who was watching the experiment, secretly did not expect Mackenzie to come up for the second round, and was accordingly surprised to see him at breakfast. The poor wretch could hardly feed himself, but he responded with grimacing good nature to the banter of some of his companions. That banter, he felt, closed the door of escape behind him. Evidently he was under observation from all sides. He had to make good.

That first hour in the woods he thought was going to be his last. Never in his life had he suffered such anguish. Then, gradually as his muscles worked out, the pain disappeared and he found himself horribly weak.

He finished that evening tottering, but not once all day had he quit or complained. He felt a bit proud of himself. The wiry nerve and pride that had taken him through the first day changed now to fighting spirit, and he knew that henceforth only accident could defeat him. But he had not yet reached the crisis.

Each morning was a repetition of the first except that his blisters had begun to callous and his back was less lame. He had fewer cramps at night now, but his sleep (from seven to six o'clock) seemed but a drop in the bucket of his need. A great physical weariness pressed down upon him that appeared to be increasing into a kind of torpor. His limbs became leaden,

unfeeling, and reluctant to obey his will. His life-forces were at an ebb that he had never imagined possible.

The fifth morning he again felt as if he were going to die, this time from exhaustion. He seemed to be struggling through some endless nightmare, making heavy motions with a tremendous effort of the will but without sensation. Slower and slower he worked, his bloodshot eyes becoming glassy. Then, just as he vaguely told himself that all was over, something happened. What it was he did not know, but suddenly the panoply of feeble age dropped from him and he found himself strong, eager and elastic—possessed of infinite endurance. His blood coursed freely again, his muscles slid smoothly under his skin. By noon he had caught and was working with the fastest men in the gang. Thereafter, except for the usual stiffness of his hands, he was in perfect condition.

With this victory came his rise. Able to do his share, except in the most skilful ax work, he next remembered Bream's counsel regarding the superiority of brains over muscle and put his own to work upon the simple engineering problems that faced the road-makers.

His first suggestion had to do with cor-ruoying across a swamp. He pointed out that instead of using the inevitable birch for the under supports according to Joe's fixed plan, the to them valueless hard wood that stood among the pine would provide a more economical and lasting foundation. The scheme was tried with satisfactory results.

This had its effect on him. It granted him a slight position of authority, which in turn gave birth to a feeling of responsibility. It was the first time he had felt responsible for anything except his skin and his liberty, and it brought home to him the fact that upon his actions and decisions, even in such minute matters, rested the good of the firm. And the realization suddenly awoke in him another sensational discovery, that he *was* one of the firm. This brought him pride of a different sort than he had ever known.

It became a source of satisfaction at times to think that here were seventy men eating his food and breaking their backs to do his work; looking up to him as one who had achieved the pinnacle of ambition—ownership. At other times he thrilled with the thought that he and

they, isolated, cut off from help were conquering the wilderness that only waited in its blind, primitive way to conquer them. He scanned each day's scaling tally eagerly, hoping that it would exceed that of the day before.

But it was some time before he admitted that these pleasurable sensations were the fruit of the unfamiliar tree of honesty.

When at last the road-making was finished, Mackenzie's gang joined the swamper and cutters, and here he received further initiation into the mysteries of the work. Now the enthusiasm for the thing had got into him and he ate, slept, and dreamed timber. When his nimble brain, never still, caught the germ of an idea he would take it to Bream or work over it himself at night with pencil and paper until it was perfectly clear in his own mind before submitting it to his partner. Most of his suggestions were bad, but now and then he hit upon something of practical value.

This was so in the specific case of decking at the skidways.

The skidways were square clearings at either side of the logging road, and to these the logs were hauled on the travoys after cutting. Here two parallel timbers laid transversely to the road and called "skids" formed andirons upon which the logs were piled. "Decking" was the process of hauling logs to the top of such piles and was a dangerous business.

It was accomplished by means of a steel cable run through a high-suspended pulley, the log being rolled up the face of the pile by a loop of the cable much as a pencil may be rolled in a loop of string. The motive power was a horse on one end of the line. This method gave the log every opportunity to slip or slide out one side or the other and resulted in many narrow escapes for the cant-hook men who assisted in the operation.

When Mackenzie was transferred to the decking gang early in November, he felt at once that he had found his place. Tough as wire now, quick, agile, sensing a certain pleasure in matching his wits against the blind force of the logs, he became a skilful cant-hook man almost by instinct. He found here a job upon which he could exercise his mind to his heart's content, for in it he faced problems of stress, strain, and leverage and power application that changed with every hour of the day.

His scheme for improvement was obvious and simple. After a talk with Bream, orders were sent out to the saw-gangs that when they measured the logs they should also mark the exact center of each. Next a hook and chain were attached to the loose end of the decking line and the timber, wrapped securely at the marked center, was sent up in perfect safety as steel girders are raised on new buildings. Once the log was in place, Barry measured or scaled it and stamped it with the Bream & Mackenzie mark on each end.

"Funny you never thought of that," Allan told Bream with a little self-conscious pride.

"Fact is," said Dick, "I'm so busy planning the work so there won't be a lost day or minute or motion that I have to leave the way it's done to the men; and though Borwell and Dorlon are exceptional foremen, I don't think they're inventors. It's a great relief to me to know there is some one in the field with brains enough to see these necessary things."

It was Bream's first word of outspoken commendation, and Allan warmed. To him every hour brought fresh wonder at his partner's mastery of the business; his memory, his grasp of detail, his ability to put his finger almost instantly on the key to a baffling situation.

There was a skill and foresight in his daily disposition of the various gangs that provoked even the confirmed camp wise-aces to admiration.

Realizing all this, Allan's achievement dwindled to its proper proportions and he became aware of how far he must yet go before he could qualify as a "full" partner. Still, he had won his spurs in a straight-ahead, give-and-take, honest fight with something, and the peculiar, warm glow of satisfaction that filled and remained with him was doubly delightful because entirely new.

With the men he was increasingly popular in his own way, for as he grew happier his old ready wit returned. The noon hour was always the merrier because of him.

So far as Bream was concerned, he encouraged Mackenzie in the course he had undertaken. Not in a personal strain, for no reference to the past or present ever passed between them, but in conferences as one partner to another, or in consideration of the other's multifarious schemes

for betterment. To Bream, the man's new attitude appeared no more than sensible, and was commendable only for that reason. He did not believe that it predicated any fundamental change in character.

All this was vaguely plain to Allan and acted upon him as a spur. His pride again responded and his newly created fighting spirit remained at a keen edge.

But one fact dimmed the satisfaction of his triumphs; Eloise's attitude toward him remained apparently unchanged. With a naïveté of selfishness and oblivion to the past that was characteristic, he thought: "I am doing everything she could wish. My money is honestly invested; I am working hard with no thought of turning any deal; I am giving more than I'll get. If I have changed for the better, why isn't she a little different, a little warmer, toward me? Why doesn't all this bring her back to me?"

He forgot that these concessions to her ideal of life were without volition on his part, were reaction from a month-long sulk that had met defeat. He did not put to himself the question: "If I were free would I continue in the old way?" He felt that having complied with the letter of her desires nothing should now stand between them, and when this expectation failed of fulfilment he went about his activities vaguely mystified and hurt.

The snow held off until late that year, a favor for which Bream was audibly thankful every day of extra grace. Having started his camp-building and road-making in August, he was behind in his cuttings, since his whole force could not be applied to it. However, when the middle of November arrived with the ground still bare, anxiety lessened as regarded the ten million feet he had contracted to deliver to Krug & Lableau at Abimoming. Should the worst happen, the remainder of the cutting could still be done.

Old Jimmie, the former master at Eton, predicted snow one evening, when one of his fingers, an infallible weather prophet, started aching while he bedded down the horses. Not long afterward a high wind came sweeping down out of the northwest, the chill of the vast barrens in its breath, and that night the men went to bed to the clicking of diamond-hard snowflakes driven against the bunk-house windows.

Bream, making his rounds, lantern in hand, could scarcely breathe in the icy blast, and fled back to the office, satisfied that at last winter had arrived.

Next day the men rested while the storm had its will. Then was the bunk-house a snug harbor. With the stove roaring red hot and tobacco in abundance the shanty men lay in their bunks shouting to one another across the eddying pall of smoke or listening to grim tales of blizzards long gone and the deeds they provoked. Ed O'Duffy, one foot raised on a soap-box, swayed back and forth on the edge of his bunk while his red and black accordion wailed above the howl of the storm and Jack or Bill or Pierre favored with a veteran selection. Sometimes Ed himself would raise a throaty tenor on the verse of some long-drawn lumberman's chantey and the men on their backs, beating time with their thick-stockinged feet, would crash out the chorus in a mighty bellow.

On this day, too, were the youth made to know their place in the presence of their betters and to suffer those rough ordeals by which they gained full admission to the councils of the bunk-house. If in such ceremonies a fight or two resulted so much the better for the occasion as long as no man was seriously injured.

In the other buildings too, unusual events were going forward. An hour before noon Eloise said to Allan: "I'll warrant you don't know that this is Dick's birthday," and he, looking up mystified from some plan he was drawing, acknowledged the fact.

"We lumbermen don't go in for sentimentalism and anniversaries very much. Haven't time to remember them."

"I suppose that's true, dear. But I happened to remember the date and knitted this red neck muffler for him. Shall we go over to the office and give it to him?"

"Why, yes, if you want, Ellie." He rose, casting regretful glances at his interrupted work and helped her into an outside wrap.

The wind nearly bowled him over when he opened the door, and as they fought their way breathlessly through the swirling snow they could see Jimmie staggering into the bunk-house with an armful of wood. Farther away the white figures of two teamsters keeping clear a path to the

stable appeared like shadowy marionettes. They reached the office tingling and stamping the snow from their feet. Bream, who was going over the scaling tallies for the month with Barry, sprang up from the desk, surprised and delighted at the visit. Never had Eloise appeared so beautiful to him. Her wind-whipped cheeks glowed with color and her eyes were like stars. Big snowflakes caught on her lashes or snared in the silken meshes of her hair gave her a look of unreal, wild beauty that made him think fancifully that the sprite of the storm had ridden in through the door on the gale.

"How jolly!" he exclaimed, dragging toward the stove two chairs that had once been kegs. "By George, it's a day! But I'm just lazy enough to relish a lay-off!"

Eloise unwrapped the shawl from her throat and looked about the office. She had always liked the place because it seemed masculine and had an air of being the center of power.

Bream offered the inevitable dish of tea from the top of the stove to both and his tobacco to Allan. The latter, now that he had come, entered somewhat into the spirit that had brought Eloise.

"My dear fellow, your hospitality is charming," he said, "but I'll warrant you are bursting to know why we are here."

"Informal call, I suppose," Bream leaned against the counter and scanned first one face and then the other.

"Well, hardly." This from Eloise. "A visit in pomp and circumstance set down as an informal call! Allan, how unob-servant your friend is!"

"Come now, you two," laughed Bream, scenting the unusual, "what's up?"

"Look at the calendar, sir!" commanded Mackenzie without quite achieving the irascible thunder of Dr. Johnson.

Dick obediently looked at a fly-blown calendar above the desk that portrayed in fourteen colors the grandeur of Mount McKinley as seen from a distance.

"November seventeenth," he said to himself earnestly. "November seventeenth." Then, suddenly, the familiarity of the sound raised an answering vibration in his mind and the truth dawned on him.

"Thunder, I know now!" he cried, feeling a little foolish. "My birthday!"

"Brilliant youth!" said Allan, rising. "Guessed right the very first crack! Many

of them, Dick." The two men clasped hands for the first time since Allan's return long ago from his trip to Montreal. Eloise had risen also and now held out her hand in congratulation.

"The day that you remember,
The day that I forget,"

laughed Bream, and for a moment the girl's heart leaped with inexplicable emotions at the unexpected phrase. There was a swift picture of one perfect day and the flurry had passed.

"Don't blame it on me," disclaimed Allan; "it was Eloise's doings."

"I might have known! The women are death on anniversaries." Dick's voice was bantering but his eyes were not wholly unmoved.

"And death on those that have them," said Eloise. "See what I have wished on you!" and from behind her she produced the knitted red muffler.

For a moment Bream could hardly believe that this was true. His birthday and some one had remembered it! How unlike was this to any birthday he had had in the last six years.

"You—you made that for me?" His tone was gently incredulous.

"No one else this time, though I have several others under way."

As by some mental magic carpet Dick was transported back to childhood, the land of birthdays. Memories awoke in him that had long lain undisturbed, memories of his mother and father, of old places and friends. Suddenly he felt anew the loss of that life he could never recall and, because beneath his splendid manhood he was at heart a boy, his eyes grew misty as he looked down at the humble gift he held in his hand.

"It was sweet—sweet of you, Eloise," he said with surging tenderness, the wave of his love for her leaping over the momentarily neglected floodgates. "I shall never forget it, never."

Then of a sudden he recalled himself and laughed and turned the crisis aside, fearful lest she should have seen the momentary nakedness of his soul. Of Allan he did not think in this connection, so great was his concern regarding Eloise.

But Allan had seen and heard, and, sitting at the table in his cabin an hour later, he sought vainly to comprehend the suspicion of his senses. Against their clamor

stood forth reason and friendship and incredibility assuring him that sudden appearances are not fact and that Bream of all men would not love in this dangerous fashion. Comfortable and good to believe were the words of these counselors. And yet, what then of the senses, his protectors? Had they lied? Had they failed in their trust?

Bewildered, dazed, he could not answer. He knew that he must not be rash, must not believe because of one suspicion—

Time would tell, he conceded at last. Let the future decide; let eyes and ears prove their case if they could.

CHAPTER XIV

DEAD HEARTS OF MANY DREAMS

AND now was the winter of Bream's discontent.

True love, despite the wisdom of certain bachelor philosophers and poets, depends for fatal effect upon three things: quality, affinity, and propinquity. It has been said that the heaven-sent fire will leap to its own across all things regardless—like the spark of a Ruhmkorff coil. But there arises here a delicate question of honor, since honorable people refuse the acceptance of such fire unless they are perfectly sure that it comes clear of debt and duty, especially duty. Perhaps, then, there are degrees in honor?

Imagine Bream, evening-clothed, on an opera night in New York; a man of fashion and of clubs; a squire of dames, and withal an honorable man. A tea engrossed him yesterday, there will be a ball to-morrow, there is opera to-night. It is a huge world, absurdly gay, bewilderingly complex, with a thousand interests and a thousand demands. And he is honorable, both to himself and all mankind. Is it not possible, then, to imagine his meeting another man's wife who seems to light the world for him, and deliberately putting the thought of her away from him—losing the romance in his multitudinous activities? It has been done in New York, they say, though no prominent man will be quoted as admitting it.

Compare with this figure the Bream of the woods, the tanned boss of a gang that can lick its weight in wildcats, the man of action and accomplishment in whose busy mind there is still room for one vision, one dream. By the lost temper of an ugly

cook the dream is suddenly realized and almost as quickly put aside. But the love is not, for there is no land-slide of events to bury it under as in the case of your man in New York. Moreover, this outdoor Bream sacrifices what peace might have been derived from separation. He, because of his love, invites torture into his life by inviting the girl into it for her sake.

Which is the more honorable? He of the high hat or he of the high soul?

It was as impossible for Dick to cease loving Eloise as for the creeks to remain open in the bitter cold. One to whom marriage is the natural climax of development rather than the last of a series of experiments, cannot ogle and sigh and shrug the shoulders at disappointment. He goes on loving though the object of his passion passes out of his life. When she lives within thirty paces of him in an intimate and circumscribed world the result is obvious.

The winter of Bream's discontent was upon him. The days shortened, cutting down the hours of daylight and of work, giving him more time for his emotions. Storms came and sometimes blizzards that stopped all outdoor activity and left him idle for days at a time. And in these days but one desire tortured him; to be with Eloise. He found that a few moments now and again at meal-times were but an exasperation. She was more formal then, did not talk and laugh with the same music as when they were alone over the checker-board, did not show the same side to him.

On these more intimate occasions she acted upon him like a drug upon its user. She deadened the pain of the struggle, seemed to satisfy his great need. And yet when he had left her the craving would return more insistently than ever until another meeting lulled him into a sense of false security. Over and over again this happened until he scorned himself as a love-sick schoolboy.

He fought against it with all the will at his command. In the glittering snow-muffled forest he would sometimes seize an ax or a cant-hook and labor in a frenzy, endeavoring to dull his mental anguish by physical exhaustion. On snow-shoes he would tramp incredible miles over his domain, planing the next year's work, or following deer, gun in hand, to supply the camp with fresh meat. When Quarles, the

half-breed teamster, returned from a foot journey to Abimoming driving a stout husky-dog team purchased for the camp, Bream turned the attention of his spare hours desperately to them as a new diversion. But not for long, for the dogs were needed almost at once upon the long mail and supply route to Abimoming, now too heavy and dangerous for horses. Once more he was thrown back upon himself.

The dread that he would unconsciously betray his secret grew until it hung over him like a threatening hand. Afraid of expressing too much in Eloise's presence, half the time he said nothing, and such behavior from one who was normally cheerfulness itself was not lost upon the men. They speculated among themselves.

Bream, like many men whose lives have been cloistered by work or indifference to the world, stood awed and fearful before the power of this thing that he had raised up. From depths he dared not sound, voices called, hands reached up in pleading to his brain. Thoughts that he had all his life associated with madness now and again leaped upon him in the half-lit consciousness that had become his sleep. With psychic vision half averted he saw the rollings of his nature, the sediment of a hundred generations circulating slowly in his mind. Murder, suicide, immorality, all was there, all of them, each with its factitious prospect of relief, each offering a way out.

With the terror of one who hears malevolent ghosts crying in the night wind, Bream gazed upon the thousand age-old inheritances that made up his nature. But this only in certain black moments of sleeplessness when the abnormal became the normal and vice versa.

The momentary slip at the presentation of the red knitted muffler had put him on his guard. He had first realized fully then just how weak his defenses were, and he had vowed solemnly that if his secret were spared to him this time it should remain undiscovered forever.

His prayer was answered, as he knew at once by Eloise's unchanged attitude of warm, almost dependent friendship. Of Allan he never thought at all.

This was natural. Bream's long association as a superior with men had made him abrupt in his dealings with them. Either a man was or he was not. So far, Allan, despite his right-about in the

matter of work, was not. Just as Jules was not after the flask episode. There was another and very different reason for his attitude. Ever since their first meeting Allan had encouraged the triple *entente*, often telling off Bream to entertain Eloise when he himself had personal plans that he wished to carry out. Because of this ease and indifference, Bream had no reason to suspect that Allan would be keen enough to notice the brief flash of that day in the office.

Because of these things he wasted no thought upon him.

But Allan wasted a good deal upon him. The suspicion that had leaped to his mind then had been proven to his satisfaction a dozen times. The not quite easy speech with Eloise, the uneasy avoidance of her, the absence and preoccupation of his partner's mind, all were convincing of the truth.

But let it be said to Allan's credit that his months of hard work and self-discipline bore their first fruit in his restraint when the conviction came home. Tough of muscle, clear of mind, alert, enamored still of the sweet taste of ambition and success, he brought a different personality to bear on the subject than was his eight weeks before.

His first feeling was one of wretched and helpless anger at Bream. So this was what it had come to! He swore to the black, frozen trees beneath which he paced that he would get out of here to-morrow and end this! Then he recalled with a sudden access of flaming rebellion that he would do nothing of the kind, since Bream had brought him to the Y with the purpose of keeping him there, and had sworn to kill him if he sought to escape.

Of course that was past now, Bream would not kill him, but he would pursue and bring him back should he attempt to carry out his impulse. Damn this life anyway! You did your best and this was what you got for it! Why had Bream brought him up here in the first place? Why didn't he jail him and be done with it?— Oh, yes, he remembered now. Eloise had pleaded for him that wretched day at Hampton. He had heard her dimly from his room up-stairs and had thought it mighty clever and loyal of her at the time; a magnificent proof of her devotion!

Here he stopped pacing up and down the little path of beaten snow he had

made for himself. He had abruptly left his gang that afternoon and come deep into the forest to think this thing out alone. There being no wind, silence was everywhere, silence except for the snap of a tree in the cold or the scolding of a whisky-jack on some snow-laden bough. He stopped pacing, suddenly struck with an idea.

Bream had brought him up here for Eloise's sake, not for his own! After all, there was no other explanation for the quixotic action. Was it possible that he had loved her even then? Pondering long, he became convinced of this fact. A hundred little incidents that had meant nothing to him before now appeared in a new and significant light. He cursed the blindness that had made a fool of him and then, even as he cursed, ceased abruptly as a thought, entirely new to his nature, broke upon him.

"After all, perhaps it's my own fault," he said slowly.

When the first instinctive anger had passed he was no longer jealous of Bream. Only too clearly did he realize the fight his partner was making against dishonor. He was aware too that Bream had not once thought of him in this connection, that the matter was with him, subjective not objective. And not once did he doubt the other's strength in the crisis. This was a strange faith, and one without precedent in his experience; and yet it existed without wavering and without question, an offspring of Bream's own character.

Always, but particularly since his own first steps in right living, Mackenzie had acknowledged Bream a splendid figure, one who held himself high. He had grown to feel a respect for and confidence in the other's integrity, moral and physical, that was almost axiomatic. Such a feeling Bream always inspired. Deep down within him, Hill had felt it, and it was daily plain that his men felt it. And because of the contrast with his own weak, vacillating nature Mackenzie came under the spell of it more deeply even than they. It was something inherent in the man, not cultivated, and Bream would have disclaimed it scornfully had it been attributed to him.

Allan loving deeply and, one might say, unrewarded, unconsciously felt for Bream. There was something in the other's stoic

heroism and sacrifice for love that stirred the swindler to a kind of sympathy—a sympathy founded upon that axiomatic certainty of his partner's strength.

"God! How is this going to end?" he asked himself, deserting the snow-tramped glade and starting homeward through the light of a cold, yellow sunset.

By four o'clock, when he reached the camp, it was quite dark and he knew that the men must be on their way in from work. The windows of all the dwelling shanties, the kitchen, and dining-room glowed with the soft radiance of dim lamp-light, and there were sounds of activity both in the stables and cooks' quarters.

As he passed the office he heard voices inside and instantly distinguished one of them as that of Eloise, the other Bream's. He stopped in his tracks, torn between an unfamiliar sense of honor and an impulse that was for the nonce more curiosity than suspicion. That Eloise should be in the office was natural. She went there often for thread or yarn or some trifle she needed. But now Mackenzie's recent cogitations lent the visit a new and deeper significance. Helpless against a situation as certainly stainless as a child's soul and yet as fraught with danger as a hidden reef he could not force himself away. He *must* know, he *must* hear.

From where he had stopped short in the darkness he could not see into the office because of the loom of the "van" across a window that was raised a little for ventilation. Only the voices came to him, or now but one voice, his wife's.

"When I was a little girl, Mr. Dick," she said, speaking so brightly that Allan could imagine the twinkle in her eyes, "I had a Cree nurse, Akapukis, and to her I owe my undoubtedly excellent behavior. She believed that naughty girls and evil wood-spirits were close friends—in fact, that naughty girls actually had them inside. And whenever I was sulky or grumpy or pulled her awful old hair too hard, she would take me outside the stockade of the fort in the direction of the forest and say: 'Go on out there; they are waiting for you.' And I would begin to cry, of course."

"Old brute to frighten a child like that!" growled Bream.

"Perhaps, but I wasn't so terribly frightened. It was the thought of the disreputable company my sins had con-

demned me to that hurt the worst, and I used to feel horribly ashamed. You would have, too, if you had seen some of the pictures she drew of the spirits that were to be my special intimates. My snobbishness suffered, but I would honestly try to be nice for a while. Isn't this mitten coming on splendidly? Now I am going to be your Akapukis, Mr. Dick, and you must be properly humble. You have been a very unruly man of late."

"I?"

Mackenzie could well imagine Bream's feigned surprise just as he could picture the scene in the office; Eloise ensconced comfortably in a chair, knitting and chatting quaintly as she worked; Bream standing, perhaps, his dead pipe between his teeth, or sitting and whittling toward the stove.

"That reply is thoroughly of a piece with your recent behavior," she resumed sternly, and Bream snorted helplessly. "You have been scowling and growling and rumbling about this camp like a bear for the last two weeks. You have hardly spoken to me at meal-times, you have avoided me afterward, and as for a game of checkers—I declare I have just about given up all hope. No, you needn't try to bribe me with tea! I have had two cups already. And what have you done instead of playing checkers with me? You have hunted deer when you knew there was enough venison in camp to last a week; you have been industriously figuring on that old site for your dam—yes, I nearly said it—when the plans are already drawn and in that desk. Will you explain me the why of that, Mr. Growly-Grump? And you have worked the men until they are half dead and gone over the accounts with Mr. Barry until he is frantic. He tells me that every night in his sleep he chases a penny up one page and down the other of a book fourteen feet thick and a hundred feet high."

She paused a moment for breath.

"And that muffler I gave you. Now there's another sin. Despite your knowing that these very lily-white hands made it, have you ever worn it? I need not pause for a reply. I imagine that the 'turkey' I see over there in the corner knows it much better than you do—"

"Oh, but really—"

"Indeed! I have an idea that perhaps you dislike red, or that you think

it will frighten the snow-buntings, or that neck mufflers are too plebeian for the owner of Bream & Mackenzie No. 1! In fact, I have any number of ideas. Oh, don't protest! It means nothing to me except that you are an exceedingly unruly man and I am going to find out all about it. There now, serves you right! Well may you flush and fidget!

"I promise you, sir, that if you don't mend your ways I shall send you out into the forest where those wood spirits will get you—because there are boy spirits as well as girls. And jolly glad to get you they'll be; and they won't let you come back any more, either. Oh, I know just what they do.

"But I'll be frank with you and tell you that I'd rather keep you here, if you'll be frank with me and tell me what has happened to make you such a Mr. Unruly-Man-Dick. What is it, now—the work? Is anything wrong with the work?"

Still standing motionless in the snow, Mackenzie listened with amazement. Was that Eloise talking? His Eloise? Why, he had never heard her chatter so! Like an old maid at a tea party, by gad! Not in all their life together had she rambled on like that, at least to him. What had come over her?

And the cool, delightful brass of the thing! There she sat (he was positive) in one of Dick's barrel chairs, knitting away and looking up now and then, as much at home as if she had gone to spend the afternoon with Mrs. McTavish, the factor's wife at Moose. And all the time blandly oblivious to time and place; *quite* oblivious of him who was now supposed to be tramping homeward with his gang.

"No," said Bream slowly and a little thickly, as he answered Eloise's question, "the work is all right."

The thickness of that answer caught Mackenzie's ear and all of a sudden he saw the other side of the picture—Bream's side, the tortured, wretched side.

"Then—is it you, Mr. Dick?" persisted Eloise. "Something about you? Are you ill?" There was a moment's pause. "Don't tell me you are ill! You shall go straight down to Abimoming by the next sledge if you are. Poor Mr. Unruly Man!"

To Mackenzie, listening with tugging heart, there sounded a change here. The almost invisibly slender line between play and seriousness had been crossed. Her

voice, light and girlish before, had suddenly grown deeper with genuine sympathy and gentle command. Vaguely some memory, bringing with it an old ache, stirred in Allan.

"No, no, no! I am not ill! I am all right!" Bream burst out suddenly, almost wildly, as if the words had been wrung from him.

The palms of Mackenzie's hands sweated at the agony of it.

"God! She doesn't know how hard she is making it for him!" he thought with instinctive realization.

"Dick"—there was no banter now—"forgive me. I've been horrid. I've nagged you to death. I'm an old busybody and you are an old angel. But I want you back just as you were; the nice man who always let me nearly win at checkers. I miss you. *Truly* I do, Dick. Won't you come back?"

Mackenzie's heart caught and seemed to stop. Where, when had he heard her voice vibrating with that thrilling timbre, that vital, quiet hinting at unfathomable depths gently stirred? It was a memory, a voice of the past, a voice that had filled his soul once with a thousand vague aspirations. Long ago that was, long ago—before she had realized that she loved him—in that perfect summer at Moose Factory.

A mad fear gripped him so that he shook as if with an ague. Not daring to face it, beating it back from him, he staggered away into the woods just as the gangs whooped in at the lower end of camp.

CHAPTER XV

UNDER THE STARSHINE

ON Allan went blindly, stumblingly, crashing through the bare, brittle underbrush like a wounded animal, heedless of anything but the instinct to run from this fear.

He ran, but the fear followed faster and caught him with contorted face buried in upflung arms against a shorn, dead pine. And it whispered to him: "Is she in danger of loving Bream as Bream loves her?"

He quivered as though lashed, strung up thus against a whipping-post. Then when the words grew less unendurable he lifted his head and drew down his hands, facing

the question squarely as one does when the game is up.

"She does not love him consciously—yet," he thought. "Else she could never be with him, could not talk with him so, visit him so. It is not conscious." Ah! And perhaps after all, it was a dream fear, due to his damnable readiness to believe! Perhaps he had read into her speech feelings that were not hers. Certainly she was unconscious of them, blithely, freely unconscious. Perhaps, then, they did not exist. It was his hope.

And yet, once more, what of the evidence of his senses? Though she was unconscious of any feeling now, could she remain so always? His heart withered even as it answered.

Allan's mind passed swiftly beyond the narrow circle that had as its horror the possible horns on his own forehead. No fear of that disturbed him. If his faith in Bream was unshaken, what of his faith in Eloise? The sun would fall sooner than she—though she loved like the wondrous Héloïse herself! That was his faith and his mind leaped at once beyond the mere sex aspect to the consideration of more vital things—forces and causes and effects. If matters had come to this, why was it so, who was to blame, where should he turn?

Gazing blankly into luminous darkness he began to feel the first faint pressure of a burden of guilt. His knowledge of life told him inflexibly that where love faltered there was lack, not at the source, but in the object. Was every vestige of feeling for him dead in her, then? Had he really reached a point where he supplied nothing in her life?

Because he had come to this crisis in sincerity and pain he met its issues resolutely, not deferring them nor turning them aside with old-time cynical sophistry. That was past now. The very existence of his inmost being lay at stake; the one firm, indestructible, noble thing in his whole nature—his love for her—was called in question.

"She is gone. I have lost her. Oh God!" he cried in bitter realization.

With acute vision he saw that his crooked tree of life was bearing its poisoned fruit, that the wind sown was reaping the whirlwind, that prophecy, long scoffed at, was in its fulfilment. He saw it now, and despair fell on him like a garment.

Swiftly the panorama of his life with her passed before his eyes; the radiant days of their first meeting and love when he had seemed to her a perfect knight; their marriage and those brief, delirious, unstained days; the resurrection of his unworthiness and her bitter disillusion; the ensuing years when his selfish cruelty had torn the bond between them like the rending of the flesh itself. Ah, with what sacrilege had he violated the grail that she had placed in his hands! No *Galadriel* he, but a *Modred*, traitorous in thought and deed, marching stealthily against the high throne of their love.

"Oh, that I have done this!" his soul cried out. "Done this to her!" And in that cry of utter abasement was first voiced his hitherto unrealized duty to another life, another soul than his own. Gone was the thought of self, that moving force of what had been his life; remained only the certain knowledge of stewardship unfulfilled, responsibility cast aside.

The night was silent about him. Above the motionless black trees the coruscating stars glittered hard as diamonds. The snow gleamed dimly, seeming to stifle a paralyzed earth.

"Responsibility cast aside to be taken up by another!" The thought sank in, hurting him cruelly. And yet not taken up, for Bream had put it from him, would put it from him.

"Bream, too! I have ruined his life! Dick! One of God's own! Ah!" It was a sigh. "All my life I have done nothing but destroy. The finest and best—" There was a long pause. The thoughts were coming slower now. "And he suffers to keep my honor!"

In the slow descent of his spirit there was an accompanying ebb of the life forces. His thoughts faltered, his strength failed, and he came slowly, wearily to his knees in the snow, gripping his hands in front of him. His mind retained the thought of Bream like the mystic vision of a rapt saint. He lifted his gray, drawn face to the jeweled heavens and dimly the sky rained pitying starshine upon it—the intangible blessing of the deeps.

Dick Bream, Dick Bream! Farther apart than the poles were they, he and Dick, farther apart than Dives in hell and Lazarus on Abraham's bosom, father apart than parents who hate over the body of their child.

Oh, worthy to be loved but strong to put aside if need be his own needs and desires! Oh, worthy to be loved but doomed to barren pain because goodness and truth and honor were fiber of his soul and flesh, not expedients to serve his ends! Oh, worthy to be loved who could never love again! That was Dick! What was there, under God, that sustained that life to its slow burning?

Then, like the taste of brass in his mouth, like the jingling cheapness of criminal coinage to his ears, was the memory of his own life. What clinker for the dump heap of the universe, what dross in the furnace of this thing called life!

Suddenly he felt in his utter degradation as lonely, as detached as some black planet doomed to hurtle forever through illimitable space, lightless, hopeless, without resource.

He was still now, with a stillness that was cosmic, as chaos might have been before creation, profoundly listening. And presently there came to the ears of his soul a sound as of myriad tiny voices, myriad activities never still. They grew, they waxed with confused babel. The bleak death of the wilderness seemed alive with a dynamic sentence.

The billion snowflakes whispered of teeming waters and throbbing mills, fruit of their inconceivable, latent power. The tall trees, wise with the ages, murmured of lusty sap and pulsing leaf-veins yet to be. Waiting, waiting, waiting they were, not dead, but sleeping the vital sleep of gestation. With face still uplifted he saw the stars, restlessly brilliant, most magnificent of mysteries yet incontrovertible evidence of a plan, visible confirmation of man's blind faith. And they sang together in the irrefragable harmony of law laid upon thinking substance.

And suddenly, as he listened, he felt every fiber within him thrill in response to those murmurous voices and vital activities, felt them join and blend into one great, passionate yearning, soundless but flung out and up to those stars, in the last cry of a derelict soul. Desire which is life was at its apogee. Even for him, the burned-out planet, there was no death.

"Oh! Help me! If there is anything anywhere give it to me now." His head bowed upon his breast. "If there is any—"

thing let me lift myself up! Let me live again."

Who has asked in sincerity and truth and it has not been given? Who has knocked and it has not been opened unto him? Desire must bring its own fulfillment, yearning its consummation. And to Allan Mackenzie, kneeling there, listening, close to the heart of the universe, an answer came; a great peace, as wide and all-embracing as the sea.

There was a swift, lifting exaltation, a stirring as if an angel's wing had brushed close by, and a momentary touching of some height that is without description in human speech. Then there was a dropping back and all through him flowed a warm tide of sure, unshakable knowledge; a realization of divinity within and without. No longer did he feel himself a poisoned lump of clay made animate; every atom of his being seemed alive, shouting a glad recognition of his eternal kinship with deathless constructive forces. The turning point of his spiritual journey through the ages had come. He was as one slain to a resurrection.

"There is something for me!" his soul cried, unshakably convinced. "All, everything is for me if I will but stand up and take it!"

The wonder, the joy of the knowledge seemed to blaze about him like a golden glory; it ran warm in his veins and melted the ice in his breast; it raised up before his eyes the full-blown flowers of aspiration and illusion, long since dead and withered in his old-young heart. There was yet time for him to do much! Ah, so much! But it would mean treading the path of this life swiftly, very swiftly. How much time he had wasted! Now every minute was precious!

And so he came gradually and naturally into spiritual strength and resolution. Since there was something for him to do or to have or to be, he thrilled with eagerness to do and have and be it fully, perfectly, and unstintingly. He felt at last what he had ever before denied, the sacredness and responsibility of self. At certain moments he saw with flash-light distinctness how all of misery and dishonor that he had brought upon those who had touched his life was chargeable only to himself; and at others he knew that just as he had torn down and ruined so could he build up and rehabilitate.

He sprang to his feet, alive with eagerness, lifting his face to that remote and ever-to-be-worshiped sky. And what had once come down as pitying starshine upon him, shone now a radiant benediction. And to it there was added a new light from within. He turned at last and started back to camp, strong in resolution, happier than he had ever been.

The question of telling Eloise of this thing that had happened to him arose, but he shrank from such a course with a sudden shyness and a twinge of fear. Not yet. He knew that every thought and habit of his former life could not be eradicated overnight, and that a bitter struggle against the outreaching tentacles of the past was before him. If his life were worthy, let that tell her, he decided—not his tongue.

The thought of her was sweet, infinitely sweet to him, and in the quick stab of remorse for what he had been to her he loved her more deeply than ever, understanding at last the depth and richness of her nature. Ah, what he might have brought into her life and she to his! But he would win her back, God helping. There was time yet, and he would make amends for all their wo. She did not love him now, but she had once, and she must again!

Suddenly he was face to face with the wretched thought that had sent him staggering out into the forest to his salvation. Bream! Was she in danger of loving Bream as Bream loved her?

A shock of new-found resolution tempered with justice straightened him to meet this issue. Just as he worshiped Eloise, so did he admire Bream for his splendidly honorable conduct. With the eye of one who at last discerns the truth, Allan saw that his partner possessed every trait, every characteristic that Eloise had demanded of himself and which he had lacked. He knew certainly and absolutely that only a man of Bream's unspotted life could ever have the eternal keeping of her soul and the inexhaustible treasure of her love. Could he attain to this and bring her back to him?

Suddenly, as he pondered, the answer came. With a deep upwelling of reverent joy he suddenly knew that now no such gulf separated Dick and himself as had formerly existed; that both he and his partner had reached the same convictions

and attained the same qualities, only by different routes and at different times; that what one possessed at birth the other had gained by suffering.

A short distance from camp he heard a fusillade of shots and a prolonged hallooing through the forest, and a sudden realization came to him that in the minds of these others he had been lost since early in the afternoon. He knew they must be looking for him. Also, with a reaction from a purely mental state, he realized that he was ravenously hungry.

At the edge of the camp he met a group of searchers setting out with torches and lanterns. He was hailed with whoops of joy.

"I was lost for a while," he said slowly, smiling in answer to their eager questions, "but after a bit I found my way again. That's all."

And it *was* all that any of them learned.

CHAPTER XVI

GRIST OF THE MILL

THE great logging sleigh with its ten-foot spread of bunk creaked and whined over the icy smoothness of the road as if complaining at the bitter cold of the February dawn. Behind it trudged a dozen men with cant-hooks over their shoulders, smoking or spitting or growling brief remarks—one gang of three such on their way to work.

Very powerful and dominant they looked, these men. Their faces were furrowed and pugnacious, with salient jaws and eyes, mostly blue, crinkled at the corners from much squinting against the snow glare. Their hands, now incased in thick woolen mittens, seemed huge, their limbs solid like the limbs of trees. Their clothes made stabs of bright color against the white banks of snow but lately turned up on either side of the road by the great V-plow.

Presently Pat McCooey, prince of teamsters, drew up his ponderous team before the mighty snow-covered pile of logs at a skidway and the loading began. It was hard and hazardous work, again bringing into play the decking line that had originally been used in skidding.

No sooner had McCooey filled up and driven off than another sleigh stood ready before the pile, for the teams twice out-

numbered the loading gangs owing to the fact that many of the men had been set clearing the river end of the recently snowed-in road, to permit of reaching the banking grounds.

This hauling was the final task of the winter, and to accomplish it the men went to death-grapples with nature. Though storm after storm beat upon them, filling up the road and making work impossible, yet time after time, doggedly, with shovels and V-plow did they clear it away, working from the torch-lit morning far into torch-lit night, eating what and when they could, sleeping in relays without a change of clothes or a moment of leisure. It was the great struggle upon which hinged the fortunes of the firm, and the men went into it like an Irish brigade into battle.

At eight o'clock Bream approached on his first daily round. At a distance he seemed taller than usual, and his clothes appeared to hang about him loosely. At close range his face had a slightly drawn look, almost ascetic, and his burning eyes seemed unusually large.

As he drew near he nodded cheerfully to the men and then stood by to watch the work, apparently taking in the details with his accustomed crisp efficiency. But in a few moments a change came over him. The fire gradually died from his eyes, leaving them lack-luster, and his attitude lost some of its attentive alertness, as if some other matter had intruded on his mind.

Nor, in turn, did this abstraction last long, for with a little compression of the lips he once more concentrated his faculties on the work.

At this point the men were sending up a light log to top a sleigh-load, and now, as it neared the tips of the skids, it stuck on some natural inequality in the wood. A lumber-jack nearest the point of obstruction leaped up the face of the load to remedy the trouble with his cant-hook. Just as he started to exert pressure one of his feet slipped and he fell to the ground cursing, his cant-hook clattering after him. His cry of rage was heard by the horse which was decking the stick, and he, being sensitive to the least sound of a human voice, as are all of his breed, stopped and slackened the cable. Immediately the log began to slide back upon the man who lay below writhing with the agony of a twisted ankle.

It had all happened in the fraction of a

second, but not too quickly for Bream to see and recognize the danger. With one bound he seized the disabled man's cant-hook, clamped it near the middle of the log, and received the entire weight. His back bent and his muscles cracked as he met the pressure. Then, slowly, he commenced to sag and give way under it. The next instant another man, less quick-witted, clamped on, and his strength turned the tide. Almost immediately the horse started again and the danger was averted.

When Dick and his companion had seen the log safely on to the load, the former suddenly stepped back, his face white, and leaned upon his cant-hook, wet and weak with exhaustion. The other looked at him in amazement for a moment.

"Ain't quite so able as you was, are you, boss?" he said, almost apologetically. "She warn't a big 'un."

"I guess you're right," panted Bream. "First time a log ever broke me." He smiled, but in his smile there was chagrin and helplessness. "Lucky you clamped on when you did, Ben."

Then, slightly recovered, he knelt down beside the injured man and examined the bared ankle. "Only twisted, I think," he diagnosed. "Here, a couple of you, help Bill back to camp and tell the cook to give him some hot water. Alternate hot and cold bandages will keep the swelling down."

When the men had gone he turned away down the road to the next skidway, leaving a questioning group behind.

"He ain't right," said one, shaking his head, mystified. "Dick Bream broke by a little 'un like that! I'd ha' never believed it in a thousand years."

"Ner he don't look like he used to," remarked another. "I've noticed it fer a spell now. He ain't the Dick Bream that come up here last summer, not by a long shot."

"Huh! Too many partners on this job, I guess. I've never knowed it to work yet."

"Or too many partners' wives." The author of this remark drawled it, his one blue eye glittering humorously, his toothless mouth drooling tobacco-juice.

"You shut your dirty face, Tony, an' leave her out of this!"

"Yeh!" "Cut that stuff," "Beeg dam liar!" and a cloud of abuse smothered the Cyclops-eyed miscreant.

"All right"—he shrugged ponderously

—"but I know what I know and I see what I see." He spat copiously on his hands and gripped his cant-hook. "And it's botchin' up the work of this camp, lemme tell you."

A silence followed as the men moved slowly to their places. There was too much of truth in the remark to treat it lightly. Curiosity finally conquered prudence.

"Well, Tony, what do ye know an' what do ye see?" some one blurted out at last.

"Ha!" The camp Cassandra laughed scornfully. "Think I'd tell you now? Go to 'ell, the lot o' you!"

This was but an example. In many similar conversations the shadow of rumor was thrown across the close-drawn life of the camp, a shadow that bred idle and evil speculations in minds fallow for such rank growth.

Dick Bream, walking down the icy road, knew nothing of this. He thought only of the truth that had just been borne home to him. Even yet his knees trembled with weakness and he was nauseated with his exertions.

He admitted to himself now that he had anticipated a collapse like this ever since that day, a month ago, when he had first felt physically unfit; that day when the strange weight, always pressing him down now, had settled on his shoulders for the first time.

To be broken by a little stick like that! Were the men laughing at him behind his back, he wondered? Ah, well, let them laugh. He hardly blamed them.

"If I could only sleep at night, I wouldn't be like this; I know I wouldn't," he thought vaguely. "That's all I need—sleep—and I would come out here one of these days and surprise the boys."

At the next skidway he found nothing to detain him, and went on down the line. His interest in the work flagged, and he found himself forcing his attention back to it time after time with a kind of grim fury. The morning developed into a struggle between his indomitable will and the soul-sickness that was consuming him. Before the men he strove doggedly to create the illusion of his expected forceful, cheery manner, and at the same time was repressing a maddened annoyance at certain trifling faults in the work that he would never have noticed in his normal state.

Repression and control—upon them seemed to hang the salvation of his life, the success of the work, the happiness of all. This thought was almost an obsession. It had grown upon him gradually, just as that intangible weight settling upon his shoulders had grown heavier with each passing day. Could he keep his trust to the end, he wondered?

One night, after supper, he sat at the desk in the office, pencil and paper in hand, going over Barry's ledger. A number of other men were in the room, gathered about the stove, talking and smoking. There was a penny out somewhere in the accounts, and as Bream chased it up one page and down the other he thought whimsically of Barry's dream, when under the same circumstances the ledger had been fourteen feet thick and a hundred feet high.

Eloise had told him of that. Idly he recalled how she had looked when she told it, how her eyes had laughed and her sweet, red lips had been parted; recalled the dark-blue dress she had worn, colored here and there with red velvet, and the red-velvet bandeau about her soft, luminous hair; recalled, too, just where she had sat, the gestures she had made occasionally as she knitted, every word she had said, in short, the whole interview. A dull, narcotic peace stole over him as he fed his imagination; time was obliterated; he existed in a detached, nebulous world of his own.

A sudden guffaw of laughter from the others at one of Allan's stories brought him back to himself with a start, and he looked confusedly at the tall column of figures before him. His mouth set determinedly, and he bent over the book, every muscle and nerve tense with concentration.

For a time he worked successfully. Then an item of seventeen cents charged against Pierre for tobacco and matches brought his birthday vividly before him and the memory of the red muffler which had yet to be worn. When at last he discovered himself in this reverie he jerked out of it, scowling and biting his lips, cursing himself for a half-witted schoolboy. Such was the state of his mind that in the end he failed to locate the missing penny and gave up the task. Lighting his pipe, he joined the group about the stove as a refuge from the dreams that haunted him.

In the course of conversation Dorlon brought up the subject of the layout of the work for the next day, usually the final discussion before turning in. As always, he consulted Bream.

"How about that No. 3 loading-gang, chief? We figured last night it might be better to split it up and put 'bout half the men road-monkeyin'. If we do, what'll we do with the rest of 'em?"

For a minute Bream looked puzzled. Then his face cleared slightly.

"Oh, yes, I remember we *did* speak of that." He stopped, struggling desperately with his treacherous memory. "Let me see. Let me see. Look here, I'm sure I gave directions about it." He gazed at the foreman almost in appeal.

"Not to me," the other disclaimed. "I ain't heard nothin'."

Taken aback, Bream's face darkened as his color mounted. Grimly, almost savagely, he fought for his former instant mastery of such a situation.

"Well, now—I *know* I said something to somebody about that No. 3 gang. Was it you, Allan?"

"Yes. This morning you said you thought that half the gang should be put on the road and the others should split and go up the travoys looking for dead wood. We're getting pretty low out front."

"Oh, yes, I remember now. Thanks. Do that, Dorlon. And, by the way, I suppose they'll want horses. Can you spare a horse for each party?"

The foreman looked nonplused, and after a moment Allan again interposed:

"Oh, yes, that will be all right, Dick," he said. "Jimmie tells me that Barney and Joe can come out of the stable tomorrow."

For a while the discussion went on, and then, after a period of awkward silence, Mackenzie rose, yawning audibly.

"Well, boys, me for the hay," he remarked, and opened the door.

"Same here," rejoined the others, and straggled out after him.

When beyond ear-shot, Dorlon turned to Allan.

"What's the matter with the chief?" he asked, his thick forehead corrugated. "I never seen him like this before."

"Nor I," replied Mackenzie. "He used to be a wizard at managing the gangs, but now he doesn't even know where they are. There's something wrong with him."

"Lord, yes. It's got me beat," said Dorlon, and, unenlightened, went on to the bunk-house.

Though Mackenzie had spoken with intentional evasiveness, there was much of genuine surprise in his reply, for he was totally unaware of Bream's actual mental state. To his eyes, during these last weeks the man had apparently conquered his secret passion.

Ever since that conversation in the office, when Eloise had playfully chided him, Bream had been outwardly changed, had presented a more normal aspect to the world. This was a result partly of fear that he had betrayed himself and partly of pride. With a resolution that can be found only at the heart of true manhood, he had bound himself with a vow of steel to restore to his association with the Mackenzies that air of delightful friendship that had characterized it early in the summer. This course offered him a last honorable method of life, and he set about it with a fixity of purpose bordering on fanaticism. Like an anchorite of old, crushing all natural hope and longing into dust, he came to glory in the pain he suffered.

And he succeeded. His moroseness disappeared and gave place to an unflinching cheerfulness. He laughed and talked, seemingly, as of old. He played checkers with Eloise of an evening or drank tea with her of a stormy afternoon. He read to her and walked with her occasionally and bantered with her. And between times he accomplished prodigies of herculean labor, during which he forgot to eat, and at night found to his great detriment that he could not sleep.

This attitude he maintained so doggedly and with such success that Mackenzie, watching him narrowly and hopefully, came to believe that the passion of the man's life had died a natural death.

Only Bream himself knew the fallacy of this supposition, but even he did not comprehend fully the toll that his resolution was asking of his life. Commanding every act by his tremendous and unbreakable will, he had gradually vitiated his splendid strength of mind and body. Preyed upon night and day by this vampire, he had wasted like one consumed by some slow, insidious poison. He suffered a sleeping-sickness of the soul.

Aside from this relentless necessity for

struggle, but few actualities had penetrated his consciousness. One of these was that some change had come over Allan. What it was or what had brought it about he did not know; he was only aware of the fact. Vaguely he divined that Mackenzie was a reversed man. Where before he had been sullen, he was constantly amiable, where too free in his association with the men, now reserved, considerate where he had been selfish, responsible where irresponsible before.

This knowledge came first to Dick as a result of their closer business relationship, for as he, struggling impotently, had gradually lost his hold, Allan had more and more assumed control, supplying as well as he could the executive ability and foresight that had once been his partner's peculiar endowment.

Well it was that Bream had crucified himself when he did, for that interview in the office, which had so powerfully affected two lives, had raised a faint disturbance upon the serene surface of a third.

Eloise had left Dick that day vaguely aware of a new, personal significance in his manner. The feeling was not even a suspicion, so evanescent and unlooked for was it. Rather it was the fleeting intuition of an unstained soul, like the shadow of a hawk's wing upon snow.

But because she was genuinely without the superficial vanity that seeks admiration, she condemned the intuition as an evidence of her own imperfection of thought, feeling herself guilty of an injustice to the man whom it concerned.

"He do that?" she questioned slowly, and then shook her head in absolute negation. "Not he. Any other man, perhaps, but not he." And she put the thought from her with the instinctive repulsion of a delicate nature.

And just as Bream had thrown the fleeting shadow across her life, so had he dissipated it by his subsequent actions. The friendship that in her belief moved him to bring Allan into the wilderness had reappeared, apparently restored to its old footing, and her new happiness had continued unbroken.

The change in Dick's appearance disturbed her deeply, but she laid it to the demands of the work which, owing to the unusually heavy snows, were unceasing. And in this, with ready discernment, he confirmed her, explaining the necessity for

it and forcing upon her a silent but unwilling acceptance of the situation.

Another matter, too—the remarkable change in Allan—gave her much food for thought. Where in Bream's case its appearance had been registered by an unanalyzed feeling, in hers it became a vital fact, due to its manifestation in his every action.

Not because she did not feel deeply, but because hers was an ordered life of the spirit, unconscious of the undercurrents of deep significance and tragedy that swirled about her, she could not know by what means the alchemy had been wrought in her husband. That it had rested fundamentally on the fear of losing her would never have crossed her mind.

In truth, she laid it to the reactionary influences of his enforced stay in the Y, the hard work in the open air, the responsibility that had fallen upon him, and the fact that his perverted talents had found vent in the exercise of a natural ambition.

Whatever the cause, she saw the effect and rejoiced in it, feeling that an old contention of her own—that under certain favorable circumstances Allan would reform—had been proven. The benefits to herself in peace of mind and higher standards of daily intercourse were many, but these were not what brought the keenest satisfaction. Chiefly she was glad for Allan, recognizing that in this new way of life he was happier than he had ever been. And in her delicate woman's way she let him understand her appreciation of it.

"Oh, if he had always been like this!" she often thought regretfully. "What life could have meant to him! What he could have made of himself! What he could have accomplished!" And then her thoughts would flow back to Bream, through whose agency Allan had found himself, and she would wonder in what coin payment could be made.

So, with each life working itself out to its appointed end, days passed into weeks and the logging year drew toward its close.

CHAPTER XVII

"TWIN HALVES OF A PERFECT HEART"

"YA-AS'M," said Pete Rolfe one day, as the aristocracy sat at dinner, "they's

spring in the air. Fer a week past the boys 've been filin' the 'corks' of their boots an' fixin' up the wannigan. Pretty soon we'll hear the water noises, an' then we'll set up half the night alongside o' the rollways waitin' fer some one to yell: 'She's movin', boys! She's goin' out!' Them's the great days, Mis' Mackenzie. They're like a kid's Christmas mornin' to us, 'cause once we can git on the river we're Goddlemighty sartin there's a town along it somewheres, an' that we'll strike it sure as death an' taxes if we keep goin' long enough."

"Say, Pete, you had better take to the stage instead of pulling teeth," remarked Bream dryly. "That was a regular speech, telling all about the glorious spring-time in a lumber camp. Continue! Resume!"

Rolfe blushed and poised his fork with recently acquired grace.

"Mebbe ye wun't believe it, but I git talkative thisaway every year just afore the ice goes out. I could set up all night gassin'—I could, fer a fact."

"Well, you'd better not try it if you value your sweet young life," put in Mackenzie, looking up from his engagement with half a dried-apple pie. "I'd hate to raise a tombstone over you that said 'Here lies a cook that might have been a good dentist only he asphyxiated himself with his own gas.' That wouldn't put any stars in your crown."

"Nor any crowns on teeth, either," rejoined Bream, and Rolfe rolled his eyes helplessly.

They were all in good humor, for the late March day had brought to camp the first balmy breath that prophesied spring. Although the temperature had been high for almost a week past, the mingled rain and snow had kept the air dank and chill with the poison of winter's last illness. To-day there was a sense in every one of quickening desire and stirring ambition, balked and warred against by lassitude. Hope and joy and good-will seemed suddenly to have sprung up like crocuses in a lawn.

Only Eloise maintained energy against the relaxing warmth.

"I *must* get into the woods to-day!" she cried, as they drank the last of their tea. "I want to go and plan all the new spring decorations; how the trees will look when the snow is gone, and the rocks and creeks and hills and lakes. And, speaking of lakes, that reminds me, Dick Bream,

that you have never yet taken me to Moonstone Lake, as you promised. Let's go this afternoon."

"But the rollways—" he protested foolishly, dreading the jaunt. "I wonder if they will be all right!"

"Probably not, being very young rollways, but still there are Allan and two foremen to look after them," she retorted commiseratingly.

"You're elected, Dick," shouted Allan when the laughter had subsided. "Show the lady all the desirable villa plots."

Half an hour later they set out on snow-shoes, the girl garbed in the usual yellow buckskin dress, high leggings, mackinaw, and round fur cap perched on top of her shapely head. Her hands were mittened, and around her waist was tied a vivid scarlet sash of knitted wool, worn only because it gratified her delight in seeing the dazzling color against the snow.

Leaving the lower end of the camp, they tramped straight south along what had been a travoy trail for hauling wood. Presently this came to an end, and they turned off to the east through the virgin forest, skirting prickly berry thickets, dodging under tree limbs, and leaping across tiny watercourses whose ice had begun to rot.

Finally, when they had topped a long hill, the girl sank down on a fallen log to regain her breath. Bream, himself glad of the rest, leaned, panting, against a tree.

"Moonstone Lake! It's a beautiful name, I think," she said. "Is it a translation from the Indian?"

"Yes. Albert, an Ojibway half-breed who runs a trap-line through here, told me about it. I met him once last fall when I was up this way for deer. There is a legend that one night, when some monstrosity of a hero or other was shooting across the sky, a blue moonstone dropped out of his knife-hilt and fell into the woods. Of course, like many legends, the obvious fact of nature provided the inspiration, and the story was built to fit the lake. In summer one can note the resemblance to the name, because it is perfectly round and of a bluish-gray color, but now there is really not much to see."

"How unpoetic you are; and on a day like this!" she exclaimed, her voice trailing off. Then, pointing with one hand: "Dick, there are two king-birds, the first of the year! See, on that maple-tree! The tip-top limb! Oh, the darlings!"

"By Jove, they are!" he whispered eagerly, as he caught sight of the white-and-brown, regally crested little songsters. "Let's go on. Perhaps we'll see a robin or a bluebird in the woods. Spring is coming, isn't it?"

The lake, as Bream had said, was perfectly circular and not a furlong in width. All about it the forest stalked down to the very edge, black and tall and sinister-looking except where the sun struck across the easterly side. There it was dark-green and gold.

"It is a disappointment, isn't it?" said the girl, looking across the frozen expanse from the end of the trail. "We'll have to come again when the ice is out. But it is lovely and warm here in the sun. And *springy*. Oh, how good to know that winter is almost over! There are certain scents to-day from the bark or the melting snow that take me back to the time when I was a little girl."

"By Jove, I've known just that experience!" he exclaimed. "A single trace of a familiar odor and a scene I have forgotten for years will come into my mind as vividly as if I had just been there. It happens most often in the spring, when everything is fresh and keen and new."

Unlacing her snow-shoes, she sat down comfortably on a broad, flat stone from which the snow had melted and made room for him beside her. Then the weariness incidental to a long walk in the unaccustomed warmth made itself felt and languor stole over them both. They remained silent, gradually quickening to the pulse of new life that had begun to throb all about them, feeling vaguely the rebirth and the resurrection of all things vital.

To Bream, tall, gaunt, the relentless master of himself, the feelings awakened in him were torture. They rent open wounds that he had believed closed forever; they bore him down with an immense despair that flaunted the futility of self-mastery and honor, those empty baubles for which he had striven so long. Desire—the desire that lifts the lark soaring to the blue heavens and causes the nightingale to burst his little heart in song—surged in him. But this he put away, knowing that only the ashes of it and not the fulfilment could ever be his. Yet there was less of bitterness in the fact, he thought, with her there beside him. Spring

was coming now. What of the time when she should be gone?

As if by telepathic communication, they seemed to be musing on kindred subjects, for she said unexpectedly: "Won't it be jolly to see Hampton again, Dick, when we're through at Abimoming—the big, red mills and the booms all full of brown logs? And Dr. Cavanaugh. Oh, it's going to be a wonderful spring and summer! You boys are going to drive your logs and fulfil your contracts and make money and then buy a lot more land up here and become 'lumber barons.'"

"It would be the sensible thing to do," he admitted, smiling. "However, there's considerable to be accomplished before that. The prospect of the drive down a new river has cost me a fair amount of sleep already."

She was studying the clear-cut profile of his face, and saw in his smile an expression that had come into it more and more of late—an expression combining great strength of purpose with a sweetness of soul that was the outward sign of his inward victory—though she did not know this. And now, added to this sweetness, there was a kind of wistfulness that drew her heart-strings.

She looked into his eyes as he talked and discovered there unconcealable pain, and her nature melted with a mysterious fire. She thought: "Oh, Dick, Dick! What has happened? What is it?"

Aloud she said with mock severity: "But before you buy land or do anything else, young man, you will take a vacation. I shall make Dr. Cavanaugh prescribe one for you. And if you won't take it alone, Allan and I will come with you and see that you *do* take it. Oh, Dick, really I'm serious. You look terribly. You mustn't think of working after the drive. Promise me you will rest and take care of yourself."

He thought for a few moments.

"Yes, I promise," he said. "I think we shall all need a rest after the drive."

In his secret heart he had set that event as the goal past which his fortitude must bear him.

"And next winter we'll all come back," she went on with mounting enthusiasm, "ready to conquer the world! I'm sure you and Allan can contract to deliver fifteen million feet; at least he says so. And as long as he won't let me teach school

or stay in town during the winter, I've already planned a dozen improvements for the camp.

"First, please, I want an addition built to our cabin and more furniture. After the drive I expect to buy beautiful warm curtains and pillows and animal skins and things, and perhaps wall-paper, if the men can put up smooth board sheathing inside the logs.

"And the bunk-house, too—I've been thinking about that, wondering if we couldn't make it a little more comfortable for the men. Really, I don't see how they stand it in that cold, drafty place, with only one stove and practically no light. Now if we could only build another big shack with plenty of lamps in it and a smooth floor for dancing and a raised place at one end where Edward O'Duffy could play his accordion and have all the old magazines—What are you laughing at, Dick Bream?"

"Your blessed uplift movement," he chuckled. "If you want to ruin a lumber camp, make it into a Y. M. C. A. But I do approve of the dancing floor. The men must have their dance now and then or there will be trouble. But see here, Eloise, it's delightful to count our chickens, but we must remember there is still a lot of ice on which we can slip and break the eggs. A great deal may happen between here and Abimoming. And afterward, too, for that matter."

She sobered at the light reproof and knitted her brows as if some new thought had come to her. Then, after a moment, she said, casting aside her light manner: "Dick, you've seen the change in Allan, haven't you?"

"Yes." Of late it had become more and more noticeable to him.

"I—I think it means that his life will be different after this. I don't believe he will ever fail again. He is too happy as he is now. And—Dick, I want to ask you something. Will you let him come back here next winter—back here as your partner? It will give him something to pull him over next summer. For he *may* need help then, and I want to be ready with it if he does."

Bream looked intently at the dirty snow around the edge of the rock upon which they sat, his mind slowly grasping what she had said. Of course she did not realize the immense thing she was asking of him,

he thought. Could he promise her that? He had not even looked so far himself. And yet, could he deny her anything whose granting would bring the light of happiness to her eyes?

Soothed by the sound of her voice and her satisfying presence, the throbbing vacillation of the argument gradually stilled and he began to think of her rather than of himself.

"It is horrible for me to ask anything else of you," she was saying, "after all you have already done for us—Allan and me! I do not need to tell you what I owe you and that I can never repay it. But think of it in this way, Dick: The good work is half done. Sha'n't we finish it? Sha'n't we make it as fine a thing as we can?"

"Yes," he answered, and this time without hesitation.

The balm that she always brought to him was stealing over his soul; a balm that in the end was no more than an unconscious, warm appreciation of what he had done and was doing, and a vital inspiration to cling to his purposes and ideals. Here, close to Eloise's heart and understanding, he found what every man seeks and needs in the one woman of his life—peace and the invigorating impulsion to the expression of all that is best in him.

There was silence for a few moments. Her eyes filled with tears of gratitude. Never had this man failed her. Always he gave unstintingly of himself and what was his to the betterment of alien lives—hers and Allan's. In sickness and in health he was the same, divining her feelings and desires instantly and without argument, seeming to catch the voices of unvoiced longings with the intuition of perfect spiritual accord.

"Oh, Dick, you are good!" she said simply. "And because you are so good you have made life good to me. Can you understand when I say that you have given me back things I thought I had lost and proved to me things I had come to believe were only myths? But it is so, has always been so with you. Now, whatever may happen, I shall know that these things *do* exist, for I have seen them and touched them and had them in my life. And they have made me better. Do you understand what I am trying to tell you, Dick? I know you do. And I know you will forgive me for telling it."

"Yes, if you ask forgiveness." His voice was tender, gentle, and, though his eyes were misty, the pain had gone out of them. Now they held a lambent, serene flame of exaltation that seemed to light his whole face, softening it of its hard, pinched look and making it appear infinitely gentle.

There was no longer any struggle of the senses in him, no clamoring of starved lips and aching arms that must claim their own. That had been stilled by her sacred presence, purged from him in the white fire of a loftier passion. Only remained a high sense of the worthwhileness of all that he had undergone, a certification and seal upon his suffering. It was a supreme moment of reward, and he experienced in it a still, pure bliss whose glory transcended any physical joy he could ever know.

"Why should I not tell you?" she went on, as though returning from some far land of thought. "You have understood everything else, you will understand this. Spring is coming—I feel as if it were here—and the long winter I dreaded so has been the happiest since my marriage. You have accomplished everything you set out to accomplish—and what I have prayed for and desired so long has come to pass. Oh, Dick, I knew it would. Things *do* come if one *knows* they will! They come somehow, though we can never foresee the agency. I believe it, Dick; I do believe it!"

"Yes," he replied with unswerving, strong faith, "they do come some time—in this life—or another—but they come."

"And you have brought mine. Because Dan Silver fought Allan you came into my life and raised it from disgrace and unhappiness to honor and happiness. How strange it all is! Little do we know who in all the world may bring us priceless gifts."

"And so it behooves us," he smiled whimsically, "to be good to all the world."

"Yes, to be good to all the world," her voice trailed off gently. "What a simple thought it is, and yet how hard to fulfil. But it is a true thought, and you have lived it, Dick."

"If I have, it is only because I knew that you knew—and appreciated."

Silence fell between them, one of those silences in which mind blends with mind and spirit with spirit; in which there is exquisite union of complementary natures. There was no touch of hands, no thought

beyond the thought of friendship, yet was there a communion as perfect as the unfolded clasp of a double flower.

Bream, comforted, ennobled, inhabited a world of strange, unreal beauty in which there was no place for speech or thought. It was a radiant world, luminous with a golden haze, and peaceful like a heart at rest. And into it presently, as he sat there motionless, stunned with loveliness, came music: three plaintive notes, a liquid trill and a wild, sweet cadence abandoned at its climax.

There was a fragrant pause and it came again, sweeter, more piercing, more abandoned. And from somewhere deep in the forest staccato flute-notes answered it, warm, throbbing, sensuous against the bleak, white wilderness.

"Dick, listen!" breathed the girl raptly. "The first spring warblers!"

CHAPTER XVIII

A FUGITIVE IN THE DARK

HALF an hour before sunset they returned to camp, tired and subdued, but silent sharers of an exquisite memory. Bream left her at the cabin and, declining tea with her, since he thought she might wish to rest, returned to the office. There he poured himself a dish of the strong beverage from the granite pot on the stove and stood thinking.

He felt strong, satisfied, courageous, and for the moment his long inert passion for the work returned to him. He recalled clearly for the first time in weeks the exact situation in regard to it. Everything appeared to be in excellent shape, ready for the drive, in fact, as soon as the frost should relax its icy grip on the rivers. Nearly eleven million feet had been cut, and he knew that Krug & Lableau would buy it all, being a new firm tapping a new territory.

It had been a rather satisfactory winter's work, taking it all together. Only the harnessing of the river stood between the firm and success, and Borwell had told him that the channel was not extraordinarily difficult. The firm's outlook appeared favorable, clear to the end.

With his feet on the dull, nicked railing around the stove and his pipe in his mouth, Bream considered every aspect and found it good.

All this was normal and wholesome and as it should have been but for one thing: Bream was still exalted, still stimulated to the highest pitch by the events of the afternoon. In other words, his formerly normal state was now his exalted one and his present normal state was one of de-vitalized mind and body. As yet he still lingered on the heights.

Then, gradually, as he sat there, the afflatus that had sustained him began to ebb, and the room became peopled with the dark shapes that so long had been his nightly companions. He began to feel cold, anemic, depressed. His brow contracted into an unrelaxing knot and, shivering, he crouched nearer to the crackling stove.

With all the resistance at his command, he sought to check the downward swing of his spirits, but the reaction was predestined, and it conquered him irresistibly. Because he had dwelt with such ecstasy upon the heights, the fall was correspondingly greater, and it bore him down to the uttermost depths, like Lucifer hurled into hell. And because he had known so completely the rarefied atmosphere of the spirit, the inseparable demands of the flesh came upon him in the form of his never-ended craving for her whom he loved.

He sprang up and started to pace the floor. An uncontrollable loneliness surged through him, accompanied by a feeling of imminent tears. His hands craved the touch of her hands, his arms ached for the feel of her in their clasp, his starving lips awakened to the full comprehension of their starvation.

"Oh, my beloved! My beloved!" he cried, stopping in his walk to lean weakly on the back of one of his grotesque chairs. "Oh, Eloise! Eloise!"

His hands gripped the wood until it seemed as if the knuckles would burst the skin. His face was leaden-gray, like a death mask, and his forehead glittered with the sweat of his despair. And because he had fallen so far, he was deaf now to the feeble, forgotten call of the heights he had left. He thought of them with a snarl and viewed their shining summits with a curse.

Then a blind fury against the thwarting of his life shook him.

"Damn it, do they think I'm a god?" he cried, striding swiftly up and down again. "Why was this given me? Why

couldn't I be like other men? I've never done anything to deserve this, and yet evil men can have all the things that are denied to me. Damn such a rotten system! *Damn it, I say!*"

He halted, instinctively aware that such ranting gained him nothing. Then regret for his outburst swayed him, and after that he sank down upon the edge of his bunk, weak, apathetic, lost in a coma of resistlessness. His frayed nerves were quivering now like taut wires and his muscles twitched involuntarily.

Voices and the tramping of feet outside indicated that the men had come in from work, but he did not hear them. Barry opened the door suddenly and Bream leaped to his feet, beside himself with nervousness.

"Get out of here!" he yelled, wild eyed, and the little scaler, seeing the whites of those eyes in the dark, backed away frightened, drawing the door after him. Then he hurried off to find Mackenzie.

Galvanized into activity, Bream's mind seethed again. In a momentary flash there came to it a disjointed recollection of his conversation that afternoon with Eloise. He had promised to keep Allan in partnership, promised to come back to this isolated hole next winter. And *she* would be here!

His fists tightened spasmodically at his sides and his indrawn breath twisted between his teeth. God, he couldn't do that! Had he lost his reason entirely when he promised it? His hands vaguely sought his forehead and pressed it, striving to subdue its wild throbbing. Another winter like this? The nightmare prospect seemed haunted by a gibbering host of tortures. Another winter like this? No! No! Death first. The structure of his strength and resolution, undermined by long months of repression, crumbled down upon him like an avalanche. And in the overwhelming ruin something snapped.

Another winter like this? No! Nor another month, nor day, nor hour. The end had come. He could endure it no longer.

A swift determination took possession of him. A moment of fumbling and he struck a match and lighted a lamp. Next he stepped quickly to his bunk, and from beneath it dragged his "turkey," or clothes-roll. This he spread out on the floor. In it, with a few other treasures, he

saw the red muffler that Eloise had knitted for his birthday, and, stabbed by a pang of agony, he gathered it in his hands and pressed it passionately to his lips. Then, putting it gently aside, he began to make rapid journeys to and from the row of nails upon which hung his clothes, throwing the garments down, regardless of order.

Then, suddenly, he became aware that the door had opened and, glancing up, he saw Allan standing by the counter staring at him.

"What are you doing, Dick?" asked the other curiously. "What's the matter with you? Barry just told me you ordered him out of the office. Any trouble?"

"Yes, there's trouble! Too much of it! And I'm not going to stand it any longer!" Bream moistened his lips. "Shut that door and fix it so nobody can get in. Then come here. I've something to say to you!" His voice was unnatural, rapid, high, with the timbre of a wire stretched to the uttermost.

Instantly Mackenzie knew that something was gravely wrong, for it was plain that Bream was at the breaking point; but what had brought about the situation he could not imagine. For only a moment he hesitated. Then, smiling, as if humoring a child, he locked the door by turning two stout wooden buttons at top and bottom and crossed the room toward his partner.

"Look here, what are you putting all your clothes in that turkey for?" he demanded. "One would think you were 'going out,' to look at you. Let me help you hang them up again, that's a good chap." He reached out for a garment in Bream's hand, but the other threw it angrily on the pile before him.

"Let 'em alone!" he commanded in a white fury. "And you listen to me! I *am* going away from here, and I'm going to-night, now, just as soon as I can pack up. And I'll keep on going till I can never see this cursed hell-hole again, or hear the name of it, or even *think* of it. I'm—"

"Man, man, you're crazy!" broke in Allan, seriously aroused. "What are you talking about? You can't go away from here to-night, Dick! What's come over you? Let's get at this thing."

Bream snorted scornfully and went on in the same high, thin voice, speaking very rapidly:

"No, I'm not crazy, but I ought to be!

I've gone through enough to be crazy! For months I've lived in torture here and you've never known—nobody's known. Worked like a horse all day and lain awake all night, that's what I've done! In the last week I haven't had nine hours' sleep altogether. And that's just a sample. Do you wonder I'm half mad?" He pressed his hands to his head, his feverish eyes fixed on his partner. "Why shouldn't I be crazy? But I'm not. I'm just done with everything, that's all. I'm going to get out of here. You can take things over! Shut up! I *am* telling you." He sought to concentrate his seething mind. "Seems to me the business is all right. There's only the drive yet, and Borwell and Dorton are good men. Oh, hell, I can't think! It's all yours—all this"; he swept his arm in a swift circle. "I'm done, I tell you, and you've got to look out for it!

"Allan, I mean this!" His voice was less agonized now, as if the very assault upon the floodgates of long-maintained repression had brought him relief. "I'm going on a long trail. You'll never see me again—any of you. Don't oppose me, don't argue with me! Help me.

"Go down to the storehouse and get me some grub—enough for a month. Do you hear me?" his fists clenched. "What are you standing there for? *I'm in a hurry!*"

Mackenzie shrank back for a moment, and then a new combativeness revealed itself.

"I won't do it, Dick," he said stubbornly. "I won't let you go! I won't listen to any more such rot. Leave me all this"—he imitated Bream's gesture—"twaddle and poppycock! You know I couldn't manage it if you did leave it. Now what's the matter with you? That's what I want to get at. You're going on here like a madman without a single good reason that I can make out."

"Ha!" barked Bream with bitter staccato laughter. "Ha, ha! You won't let me go! Ha, ha! Oh, yes you will! You'll help me fast enough when you know the reason. You'll get the grub and you'll say it's a fine night for travel. Ha, ha!" He began to struggle with his bag, kneeling on the floor and looking up at Mackenzie with bared teeth.

"Maybe it's my fault; maybe I wasn't man enough to live in hell for the rest of my life! Maybe it's your fault; maybe

you weren't man enough to come up here and take your medicine alone. Ah! What's the matter with you?" as Mackenzie started back, white to the lips.

"So—that's—it!" breathed Allan almost inaudibly, his mind bearing up gradually under the shock. And then, as if to himself: "I thought that had passed long ago."

"Ha! You knew it, then. Good! I wanted you to know it, all of it, from first to last. And I'm telling you because I can't tell her, and there's no one else to tell, and because I don't care a damn what you do about it. Here!" Bream fumbled in a leather holster that lay on the floor and tossed a .45 on the bunk near Mackenzie. "Shoot me! I deserve it. I'll be glad of it!"

For a moment Mackenzie regarded his distraught partner in stupefied amazement. Then he said:

"If you weren't so clearly unbalanced, Dick, I would say you were acting. I tell you I discovered all about this a long while ago and became convinced that you had got over it. If I had been going to do any shooting I'd have done it then, not now. But let's not talk about it. Try and control yourself."

"I *will* talk about it! You've got to understand! Control myself! Haven't I controlled myself until I'm almost insane? Do you think I'm superhuman? Now *you* control yourself if you can!

"I spared you at Hampton because she asked it, because I couldn't refuse her. It had begun then. But you wouldn't come up here alone. You were selfish and ugly. I thought I was man enough to face the situation and crush the thing that had got hold of me. I wasn't afraid when you forced me to bring her along.

"But I failed. Great God! how could I win? Somewhere else it might have been possible, but up here, a hundred miles from anywhere—so close to each other! Every day the thing grew, and every day I fought it. I worked in the woods like a galley-slave. I tried to divert my thoughts, but it was no use.

"Allan, I'm one of the kind that can love only once. I found myself getting weaker and weaker until I was afraid she would know. Then I pulled myself together and stood out to save her—at least in appearance. You think I'm acting now, but I'm not. It was *then* I was acting.

"And all the time something was killing me inside. I got so I couldn't remember—couldn't think. One day before the men a little top log broke me. My mind and body were going. My only thought was to stick it out till the drive was over, and I kept counting the days, *making* myself stick it out, believing that nobody would know.

"Then to-day I promised that our partnership would go on next year and that we should all be up here together again. She asked it, and how could I refuse? Then, when I realized what I had done, the folly, the impossibility of it all came over me. I can't do it, Allan! Another winter here, when I can't endure it another second? I'm going, I tell you! I'm going!"

The last words he all but shouted, and Allan, his face white, raised his hand warningly. Bream stopped, panting, his whole frame tense with the high pitch of his feelings. Then, during the silence that ensued, he gradually relaxed. The wild outburst of passion, the utter abandonment after his long repression, had brought him relief. Normality began to assert itself.

"I had no idea it was like this, Dick," said Mackenzie at last, deeply moved. "No idea it was like this." He sank down into a chair, glimpsing vaguely between the other's spoken words the vast, unvoiced suffering that had caused them. "Oh, Dick, I'm sorry!"

"Don't be sorry! It's past that." Bream's voice was quieter now. "Just help me. That's all I want you to do. I've failed, but there's a chance for all of us yet."

Suddenly Allan burst out:

"But I won't have you go, Dick, *you* who have done all this." He indicated the camp. "Here is your life-work, here is your money. We have come in here and driven you out of it. *We'll* go! *We'll* go to-night. I'll say something; give some excuse, but we'll go."

He sprang to his feet, but Bream's outflung arms arrested him.

"You go and leave me here?" he cried, almost panic-stricken. "You'll not! Do you think I would stay a minute longer in this place? I hate it. I hate every log in it; every tree, every foot of ground! There's nothing here but turns me sick with loathing. I wouldn't stay here if I

was to find a million dollars to-morrow. I can't stand it, I tell you. I won't stay. Do you want to kill me?"

Abstractedly Mackenzie walked to the stove, lifting and setting down one after another the things that stood on it with a little clatter that sounded loud in the silence. Then he turned to his partner, who had risen and was leaning his head upon his hand while his elbow rested in the upper bunk.

"But, Dick, be reasonable. At least give yourself the benefit of a second thought. Sleep on this; wait until to-morrow before you decide finally; think again before you take this step."

Bream turned his head and his eyes narrowed menacingly.

"Look here, Allan," he said in an ugly tone, "are you just an idiot, or can't you understand English? Do you suppose I've told you all this to amuse you or to amuse myself; to make an impression on you with the idea of letting you dissuade me from my purpose? God! what do you think I am? A hypocrite and a liar as well as dishonorable?" With eyes flashing now, he spat forth his ultimatum, pounding the edge of the bunk at every word: "I'm going now! And I'm going for good! I never want to see this hell-hole or any person in it again! Can—you—understand—that?"

Mackenzie lifted his eyes and studied for a full minute Bream's gray, contorted face. He saw at last the futility of reasoning with the man in his present state. He considered the problem carefully.

Might it not be better for all concerned to let him go and trust to the reaction to bring him back? And yet it would be a difficult situation to face—like a mysterious-death in a family—so much to explain, so much to endure in the way of gossip and suspicion. Moreover, there would inevitably be a very detrimental effect upon the men.

On the other hand, things being as they were, the sooner the break came the better. The tremendous gravity of the situation finally forced itself into Allan's mind. Not only self-preservation urged him; the desire to do the best thing for Dick was paramount in his swift deliberations. He could see that for all concerned a continuance of the present status was out of the question. And yet it grieved him sorely.

"Well, Dick," he said heavily at last, "I guess you had better go. For your own sake I say it, not for ours. We have no right here; we have ruined your life, and I would be willing to be turned out penniless to-night if it would bring you back any of the happiness you have lost. But I see it could do no good, and I shall say no more. If I can do anything, command me."

"You have your storehouse key?"

"Yes."

"Go down there and get me enough flour and beans and tea and stuff to last me a month. You know how much; you've traveled."

"Yes."

Allan started toward the door and then halted uncertainly as the supper-bell rang out its summons.

"Now's our time," said Bream hoarsely. "Wait till the men get in and then go for the grub. I want to be off by the time the second half is finished."

When Allan returned the turkey was ready and Bream was busy with the duffel-bag.

"There's a lot I ought to know about the business before you go, Dick," said Allan. "Now the drive—"

"Borwell and Dorlon will take care of that. All you'll have to do will be to supply the brains now and then. You've done that for so many weeks already, I guess you can do it for a few more." Bream was packing feverishly, excitedly, eager to be away, now that his full heart had been spoken.

The wide, free, air-sweet, open spaces of the long trail seemed to be calling to him with soft promises of easement, like the allure of an earthly Nirvana. A long-forgotten verse suddenly repeated itself over and over in his brain.

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

It sounded like a triumphant battle-song to him now, voicing as it did the spirit of his mood. He was done with men and their lives and their ways. Under a wide and starry sky his life should work itself out to its appointed end, and then he would lay him down with a will, more glad, perhaps, to see the end than the slow approach of it.

"Now if we come through to the mills all right," Allan broke in upon him, "and deliver the logs according to contract, there ought to be several thousand apiece in it for us after all expenses. Now what shall I do? Where shall I send your share to reach you?"

"Don't send it. I never want to see it. Put it in the Sawpits bank to my account and let it stay there. And go on with the business, Allan. It's a good business. Put your money into more land. It'll make you rich some day, and when it does, you can put my twenty thousand back with my profits. Or never take it out; I don't care."

"But you, Dick, who have done so much for me and would do this"—Allan choked—"to have nothing, not even the little money that is yours!"

"Money! Hell!" said Bream vaguely, sitting back from the duffel-bag, his face smooth and serene.

And, as if chanted by some silvery voice, the remaining brave, melancholy lines rang in his ears:

This be the verse you gave for me:
*Here he lies, where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.*

Presently he sat on the edge of his bunk to strap on his snow-shoes, and when this was done he gently folded the redknitted muffler about his neck and donned his cap and mittens.

"Don't go, Dick, for God's sake!" cried Allan vehemently. "I can't have you go out of my life this way!"

"Please, old man," said Dick gently, and then, after a pause: "Give me a hand with this stuff."

"But where are you going? At least tell me that!"

"I don't know. South, I guess. I want to get away from the snow and the woods." He stood for a moment, and then extended his hand. "I hold nothing against you, Allan, either for the present or the past," he said with sincere warmth.

Mackenzie seized the hand in both his own and wrung it, tears streaming down his face.

"Oh, Dick! Good-by, good-by." He choked out the words.

Their fingers parted and they went silently to the door. Bream reconnoitered for a moment and then slipped like a

shadow into the deserted road. The next moment he was gone.

CHAPTER XIX

MACKENZIE COVERS THE TRAIL

FOR a few seconds Allan stood in an attitude of listening, half afraid that he might hear the surprised challenge of old Jimmie or of one of the teamsters as Bream passed through the camp. But all remained still until it was plain that he had reached the forest unobserved.

Then Allan closed the door of the office and leaned upon the counter for a moment in an effort to collect himself. Now that the strain was removed, he suddenly found that he was weak and very tired and that his knees trembled under him.

Presently, still shaken, but more himself, he straightened up and removed his mackinaw, mechanically preparing for dinner. He carried dippers of hot water from the tin pail on the stove to the sink behind the door and washed his face and hands. Meantime into his mind had begun to filter the full realization that Bream was gone.

Gone! Never to see him again, never again to hear that pleasant voice or look into those level gray eyes. It was incredible, inconceivable! It was—

He set his jaw and crushed down what might have been a mounting hysteria. This was no time nor place for personal feelings. There was too much to do, too much to meet and dispose. Drying his face on the coarse roller-towel, he prepared for his entrance at dinner. He knew that the second half was eating, and that there would be immediate inquiries for Dick, especially since Barry had no doubt detailed fully the story of his ejection from the office.

How should he face their inquiries? How break the news?

To tell the full truth, of course, was out of the question, and yet Dick's going must be made plausible. "Slicking" his hair lumberman style, Allan deliberated with troubled heart. By the time he was ready he had reached a decision. He would stick as closely as possible to the facts, but would leave the real reasons behind them unexplained.

Hating the deceit, and yet anxious to keep dumb to the last moment the tongues

of suspicion that must eventually wag, he could see no other course. Eventually the men and the world must think what they would, but not yet.

When he entered the dining-room he found Eloise, Rolfe, and Barry engaged as he had expected. With a look and touch of greeting he sat down beside his wife. His face still showed traces of his past emotion, and there was about him an air of restraint.

"Sorry to be late," he apologized quietly to the autocrat of the kitchen.

"That's all right," Rolfe nodded. "Chief coming?"

Allan, who had reached listlessly for the beans, let his hand fall.

"No," he said with an attempt at unconcern, "he won't be in to dinner to-night."

"He won't? Why not?"

Mackenzie allowed a proper interval, and then replied:

"Says he doesn't feel very well and doesn't want anything."

"I told you he wa'n't right," interjected Barry, wagging his head.

"Dick doesn't feel well?" Eloise spoke with quick sympathy. "I'm sorry. What is the matter?"

"He has had a—er—sort of breakdown, I'm afraid," said Mackenzie, looking uncertainly at his wife.

"A breakdown!" she replied quickly, startled by the word. "What do you mean by a breakdown?"

"Oh," he faltered wretchedly, "he went all to pieces, ah—er—kind of collapsed."

"Allan!" This time her voice was thoroughly frightened, and she sat back, staring at her husband, the color ebbing from her face. "Dick collapsed! But that is serious. I must go to him." She turned to the cook. "Pete, will you put some good things on a tray for Mr. Bream?"

"Wait!" cried Allan, as Rolfe got up. For a moment he bit his lip, thinking. Clearly he was gaining nothing by this Fabian policy. Why, then, continue it? Why not breast the whole matter now as well as later? While they all waited he made his decision.

"No use bothering with a tray or anything of the kind. Dick won't touch it; he—"

"But why not, dear? He *must* eat. He can't go hungry all night."

"He won't touch it because he can't," said Mackenzie desperately. "He isn't here any longer. He has left the camp."

"What!"

"Where's he goin'?"

"Left the camp!"

"Yes, left the camp. He has started down to Abimoming to see a doctor."

A stunned, incredulous silence followed this announcement. Rolfe sank back heavily upon the bench, his jaw sagging. Little Barry posed with loaded knife in air. Eloise, endeavoring to grasp the fact, and at the same time the prey of conflicting emotions, said nothing.

Rolfe was the first to find speech.

"Sa-ay, Mr. Mackenzie, don't make me laugh," he advised with hoarse sarcasm. "Him with nervous collapses an' seein' doctors an' all *just at drive-time!* I'll be the goat. What's the answer?"

"You can believe it or not, as you like, but Mr. Bream has left the camp to go south and see a doctor. You don't think I'm saying this for fun, do you?"

"Needs it, I say," chimed in Barry, "after what he done to me! Ten doctors."

"Are you serious, Allan?"

"Never more so in my life. I've just been through an experience I wouldn't care to repeat. Without any warning he went all to pieces. It was quick as that"—he snapped his fingers—"and once he had got started there was no stopping him! Ugh! It was horrible!"

"Say, I'll believe you in a minute," said Rolfe, "if you keep that up."

"Do," said Allan dryly; "it will be a credit to your remarkable intelligence," and went on with a less halting description of what had happened after Barry had come running to him before dinner.

Eloise ate no more, but listened, stunned, horrified, trying to grasp the facts of this inexplicable occurrence. Dick Bream ill—Dick, with whom she had passed such a wonderful afternoon? Ill and stumbling south, somewhere out there in the dark and cold? It was unthinkable, heart-sickening. If she might only do something for him in his need!

"I tried to keep him," Allan was saying, his eyes fixed on the pine table. "I argued with him, pleaded with him, did everything but use force. But he wouldn't listen. He wasn't himself. Really, you've no idea of his condition. He was like a man going insane. Finally I found that

the only thing to do was to help him, and I got him some grub and stuff and—"

"Wal, I'd never ha' thought it of the chief, by thunder!" declared Rolfe, subdued. "Him the king of 'em all when it come to woods or river work! But I figger he'll still be able to git back fer the drive. A week more like this an' we'll go out a roarin'. He'll bust hisself to be here fer that."

"I hope he does," declared Barry, still unplaced.

"Aw, shut up, you runt," said the cook; "you talk too much. But why the devil didn't the chief take the sledge an' go fer his tonic? He'd ha' done it in half the time."

Mackenzie started up from the table with a gesture of despair. He had eaten almost nothing.

"I don't know," he cried, "and you wouldn't, either, if you had been there. I tell you he was out of his mind, beside himself. The whole thing came as quick as a flash and took me off my feet. But all the same I feel as if it might have been prevented. When I look back now I can see a lot that meant nothing to me before, but was leading up to this all the time. For one thing, he has been overworking all winter—we've all seen that, and besides he couldn't sleep. I didn't know that until he told me, but I know it's enough to make any one go off the handle even without any work."

"Wait till the boys hear of this," said Rolfe. "They'll never get over it! The chief off his nut an' climbin' trees like a squirrel! He'll get a reception when he gits back, believe me!"

Allan put his wife's wrap over her shoulders and opened the door. "Have the foremen come to the office at half past seven," he told Rolfe. "I want to talk over the work. Any of the others may come that wish to."

"All right, Mr. Mackenzie."

Eloise walked the short distance to the cabin in stunned silence. A wind roared with a great voice in the encompassing forest and swept down through the camp-clearing, cold and chill. The stars were veiled and there was a piercing dampness in the air that seemed to forecast rain.

A feeling of unreality oppressed her that she strove in vain to shake off—a feeling that all this could not be true. Bream ill, unbalanced? He, the strong, the calm, on

whom they all unconsciously leaned? But a few hours past he had left her at the cabin door, sane, natural, apparently happy, and now—since it *must* be true—he was alone out there in that bleak wilderness, possibly without a fire, certainly without any other comfort.

Moved by a desire to help him in his dark hour, all the maternal instinct in her yearned toward him with pitying tenderness. Where was he now? Had he eaten anything? Would he take care of himself? Would he sleep any better out there than here, where she longed to pour out her anxiety in service?

These and other thoughts thronged her brain, all a part of that sense of unreality that clung to her. There had taken possession of her a dull pain that would not cease, that obstructed her mind. It was as if the normal functions of the seat of life had been suspended for the moment. She assured herself that Bream had really gone, but was too numb to suffer from the fact.

Only one thing hurt her cruelly: that he had left without a word to her. Eager to forgive and excuse, yet she could not forgive nor excuse this. It was incomprehensible when they had been so close to each other, in such perfect accord in all things.

In the cabin, anxious, hungering to see logical motives behind what had happened, she turned to her husband, her face colorless.

"Allan," she pleaded, "what was the matter with Dick? I can't understand his leaving like this. You said he had a nervous breakdown. Why *should* he have a nervous breakdown? This afternoon he was normal enough—more cheerful than usual, if anything. He even talked about some changes he wanted to make in the camp next year, and about our all coming back here then. I can't conceive of this—this collapse. It seems like an impossibility to me."

Mackenzie, startled by the intensity of her tone, thought carefully before he replied.

"I don't know how to put it any differently than I have," he said, sinking into a chair. "It was a result of his working too hard, I guess—you've often spoken of it yourself—that and his being unable to sleep. Everything here had got on his nerves until he couldn't stand it any

longer. He told me he loathed every tree and log and foot of ground in the camp, and that he wouldn't stay here another minute if he was to find a million dollars to-morrow. He was in a terrible state, dear; you have no idea how terrible!"

"But for him to break down, Allan, *nervously break down!* I can't understand it, I can't get used to it." She was walking slowly back and forth, and now she turned her troubled eyes upon her husband. "I admit he has been working too hard, but that would bring on a physical breakdown. To have a nervous and mental collapse, such as you describe, there must have been something preying on his mind. Yet you haven't mentioned any such thing. Don't you see what I mean? There seems to be a link missing somewhere!"

"Now really, dear," said Allan slowly, "I think you are taking this whole incident much too seriously. I—"

"But do you realize that he is out there in the woods, possibly in a dangerous condition? That anything can happen to him? That he needs care and treatment instead of roughing it in melting snow in the worst month of the year?" She had turned and faced him, her lithe body tense, her hands clutching her dress at the sides. The yellow lamplight gleamed softly on the shadowy masses of her hair, but was dimmed by the fire in her eyes.

"Oh, Allan, you should have kept him! Can't you realize what you've done? Dick! The best friend any two people ever had! You knew he was seriously ill and yet you let him go. Think what he has done for us. When we were in trouble, did he leave us alone?—did he leave us to fight it out blindly by ourselves?"

"Oh, can't you see? The first time he needed you, you failed him! How *could* you, Allan? How *could* you?"

Mackenzie was surprised and for the moment silenced by her torrent of words. An instant's reflection told him he had acted squarely by Bream, taken the only course possible under the circumstances. And yet how could he convince Eloise of this without exposing the real motives that underlay the whole tragic business?

He hesitated, conscious of having been forced into an untenable position, and nettled by the knowledge of the fact. Why was she so persistent? If she only realized

what, he had been through and was going through!

He shrugged a trifle irritably and looked at his watch, rising as he noted the time.

"Our points of view differ," he said with emphasis, "because I was there through it all and you were not. If you had seen and heard what I have you would have acted just as I did." He reached for his cap.

"But to let him go away in that condition!" she said, as if weighing the problem. "I don't believe I would have done it, Allan. I can't conceive of doing it. If you could only show me—"

He opened the door abruptly.

"I've gone over all that ground before," he said with unexpected brusqueness, "and I don't believe it will help matters to go over it again. I'm going to the office. Ought to be back in an hour."

His reply, unnecessarily (she thought) impatient and intolerant, rang crudely in the girl's ears and struck her into incredulous, hurt silence. After one amazed glance at him she said no more.

And Allan, aware of that glance, went out remorseful and troubled, for he feared that doubt of him had risen in her mind. He felt that his explanations had failed to convince and that she scented intuitively that something had been withheld from her.

It was not that she suspected the truth about Bream's departure, but that she was suspicious of not having been told the truth.

CHAPTER XX

"MINE EYES HAVE SEEN MY DESIRE"

IN the office Allan found Barry and the foremen, together with many of the lumber-jacks, and he repeated to them the story of Bream's illness and sudden departure. And here, because he was dealing with a less acute type of intelligence, and because repetition had made him glib, he had little trouble in making his narrative convincing.

After a while, when the first sensation had passed and all except the usual heads had drifted out and back to the bunk-house, he got down to business. But as he talked, trying to instil cheer and confidence into the others, he became conscious

gradually of a subtle change in his relations with them. A sense of emptiness and loss seemed to have settled down upon the camp, chilling its spirit, for with Bream's going had gone the vital soul of the enterprise.

This splendid organization that he had spent six months in perfecting appeared like a watch whose mainspring has been removed—potentially powerful, but lacking the strong pressure toward action.

Oppressed by this intangible, pervading spirit, the new responsibility that he had assumed weighed heavily upon Allan. He saw clearly for the first time just how much he must supply, and his heart sank like a lump of lead in his breast.

Then to him, too, came a sudden great sense of lack. He realized that the prop on which he had been accustomed to lean in moments of indecision was gone now, that he must himself henceforth be the court of last resort, must stand alone, the bulwark of the business. And shrinking fear of incapability assailed him—fear that he might take wrong steps and make faulty decisions.

Oh, why, he asked himself in a moment of weakness, could not Bream have stuck it out through the drive?

Then shame at this infirmity of spirit goaded him and brought out a sturdy combativeness in his nature. With the clearer vision that his new life had brought him he began to feel that perhaps this which had come to-day had come with a purpose.

"Perhaps it is to test me," he thought. "Perhaps I have been working toward this all my life," and the eagerness to accomplish crystallized into a determination. It entered into his conversation with the men in the office and influenced his attitude regarding the work to be done.

Aware of the fact that Bream would not return to boss the drive, he sought to treat matters with that idea in view and yet without arousing the suspicion of the others. Tactfully he intimated that the doctor "out there" might not permit the chief to return under a considerable period, and based his hints on the enforced rest usually thought necessary after such a breakdown.

"If he comes back for the drive, so much the better," was the way he put it, "but if he doesn't, we want to be able to go ahead without him."

The conference lasted some time beyond

the hour that he had specified to Eloise, and when he returned to the cabin his mind was full of the work that lay before him. He found her in a soft, half-barbaric fur robe she used as a dressing-gown, seated beside the table, an open book lying idly in her lap. In his preoccupation he failed to notice the anxious glance with which she scanned his face as he entered.

He sat down near the stove and slowly stuffed his pipe with tobacco that he shaved from a plug with his jack-knife.

"What happened, Allan?" she asked when he had fired the weed and sat back contemplatively.

"Nothing much," he replied absently, his mind busy with a prospective dam that must be built in the river twenty miles below the Y.

"Did Dick's absence seem to make any difference in the spirit of the men?"

"Some, of course. But"—his new-born resolution to conquer enthused him—"we'll overcome that, I think. We'll *have* to overcome it. The whole success of the year depends on getting the drive through, and with Dick out of things for good we must depend—" He stopped short, his blood congealing in his veins, his heart seemingly stopped. Then, realizing that his conscious silence only emphasized the slip, he stumbled on: "Everything will depend on our preparedness in anticipating river troubles. Now—er—Borwell tells me that at Devil's Elbow a dam—"

"What did you say, Allan? *Dick out of things for good?*" Her startled voice cut cleanly across his own labored mumble. She sat motionless, seemingly with every faculty arrested, as if his words had turned her into stone. Her features were transfixed by an expression of fear, half wild, half doubting.

For a long moment she sat thus, until his confused face betrayed the truth to her dulled consciousness. She straightened up and pierced him with a flaming glance.

"What are you telling me, Allan? Dick gone for good? Are you mad? What do you mean?"

Mackenzie turned his chair deliberately about until he faced her. He knew that dissimulation between them was useless now, and, knowing it, he experienced a feeling of immense relief. The sooner Eloise realized that Dick had passed out of their lives forever, the better, he thought. And if there were to be grief

and shock, let them come at once and be over with; for it was the life before them, not that of the past, that held the prospect.

Already he longed intensely for the time when, in his new appreciation of her, he should have so filled Eloise's life with devotion that every one else, even Bream, should have faded into merely an impersonal memory.

The sooner he broke the news, then, and soothed her into the acceptance of it, the better!

He determined not to mince matters.

"I mean just that," he said bluntly. "Dick is out of things for good. He has gone away and will never come back."

With an effort she mastered the first shock. Reason reasserted itself.

"What *are* you saying, Allan?" she cried. "You can't be serious! Dick gone and never coming back! Why, that's preposterous—"

"It's true, I tell you," he insisted. "It's true."

Yet she could not believe him, although his sincerity of tone allowed no loophole of doubt.

Suddenly memory of her feelings after he had left for the office recurred and she experienced the sickening certainty of suspicion confirmed.

"I *knew* there was something all the time," she said with clear-eyed accusation. "I knew you hadn't told me the whole truth. And this was it!"

"Yes. And now I am only sorry I did not tell you in the first place. When I thought the thing over just after Dick went it seemed to me better not to tell anybody at all for a while—even you. But I see now I was wrong so far as you were concerned."

She stared at him blankly, her mind whirling, confused by the overwhelming realization that this thing must be—that Dick, the splendid, the tender, had gone out of her life for all time.

Sights and sounds became indistinct. It was as if she were walking in a fog on a poorly lighted street. She seemed to have left clear-cut realities and to be groping about blindly in a region that lacked direction and the points of the compass.

"*He will never come back!*" she told herself with wild, intuitive certainty, and then moaned aloud: "What mystery is back of all this? Why, oh, why did he go? Why? Why? Why?"

Allan, startled by her tone, looked at her sharply. But he saw nothing unusual, except the deathly pallor of her face and her misty eyes, for the words were but the unconscious audible reverberation of questions that had thundered across her trailing mind.

She still sat by the table, but now had leaned forward in her chair, as if listening, one little hand crumpling the gay bandanna that served as a table-cover.

Then, as he had always done, her husband saw and read the shell of her, that shell which years of practise had taught her to present to him, whatever the crisis. He saw her attitude, heard her questions, and his duty appeared obvious to him. He must tell her all frankly. There must be no more deceit or subterfuge between them.

But when he came to the actual telling he found himself facing a still more difficult problem. What should he say? How should he say it? How much, in fact, of the truth *could* he tell her? He hesitated, torn between half a dozen uncertainties of duty and desire.

But she was not with him either in mind or spirit, for deep in her breast a strange phenomenon was taking place—a phenomenon as of ice-breaking up about her heart and moving out from its frozen wilderness toward a radiant, vernal country. And she, borne along upon the full, strong flood, was watching with wondering inward eyes.

And still Mackenzie could not speak, dared not until he found a way compatible with both honor and delicacy.

He thought first of the effect that telling the absolute truth would have upon her. Realizing her happy memories of Bream's supposed friendship, he could not avoid feeling that such a course could only result in pulling down that fair structure into a tragic ruin about her head. And always the thought in his mind was to spare her needless unhappiness, since he had already brought so much of it into her life.

Yet, should he not tell her the truth at any cost?

He thought of Bream, and how that splendid heart had kept its secret until it had been set upon the very rood of death itself. Could he, Mackenzie, the one other sharer of that knowledge, lay bare now what it had cost almost a soul's existence to maintain?

No! There was no hesitation in his

mind now. He realized more clearly than ever the sacred character of the trust that had been laid upon him. And besides, there was another motive that confirmed him in this course. It touched himself subtly and regarded his own honor.

Could he be the tidings-bearer to his wife of another man's love?

His mouth hardened for a moment. Then, sitting motionless, with eyes riveted upon the floor, he began slowly to speak, pausing frequently as he chose his words.

"Why did Dick go, you ask? I hoped I—would not—have to tell you this. For a long time there has been—a—a—break between Dick and—and me. It started—long ago, and it has—grown steadily wider. We have concealed it—for your sake—and for the sake of—of discipline in the camp. To-day we reached—the climax—but Dick's breakdown was really what brought it on—"

Almost subconsciously she heard his voice, subdued, murmurous. But she was not cognizant of what he said. The full, strong flood in her was sweeping on now with irresistible force. Other voices whispered to her—voices compellingly sweet with the music of green things opening after a seemingly eternal winter.

The ice-bound wilderness was gone, and warm, shining fields lay about her, shimmering under the touch of a life-giving sun. Everywhere the spring warblers were singing, and there was a perfume of invisible flowers. She was in a new and undiscovered country, a whispering, odorous country, long sought and long denied! The vision of it thrilled her, and she surrendered to the thrill.

Almost without volition she rose and turned away, her face glorified, her lips parted, one hand pressed against her breast.

"Just what the break—was," Allan was saying, "I cannot tell you. Don't ask me—it is not my—right—to tell. But believe me when I say that it was—inevitable, yes, inevitable. Will you trust me that far—Eloise? And will you believe me when I say that there was no—dishonor—in it for either of us? Perhaps you will—suspect me—think that I—that I—forced him to go for my—our—advantage. But I did not—I swear I did not. That part of me is dead—now. We parted in—honor—thank God!"

He stopped and lifted his gaze and

found her risen, turned from him. His heart sank. Had she refused his explanation? Did she doubt him, after all?

He got to his feet, the prey of freezing fear, and took a step toward her.

She, tremulous in her rapt dream, yet felt instinctively his approach and turned to meet him, her face illumined.

Stricken with the strange beauty of her, a beauty that held no mirror to memory, he stretched out his hand and laid it on her arm.

"Eloise!" he cried. "What is it? Have you heard? Do you believe me?"

At the touch she shivered, and all her radiant vision was obliterated. A whirling moment and the stark realities peeped at her, ghastly, desolate, empty.

"Oh!" She shrank back from him and her voice died away to a tragic breath. "It is you! You!"

"Yes," he replied, "it is I. Who should it be? Why do you look at me like that?" His voice rose in a crescendo. "What has happened? What is the matter with you? Are you ill?"

He stepped closer, anxiously, and again she shrank back from him. Then, slowly, she turned away once more, her white face lifted, as if striving to glimpse some dying vision.

Suddenly, then, as if in despair, she sat down abruptly and buried her face in her hands.

"Leave me to myself, Allan—forgive me—don't touch me!" she muttered incoherently, half aloud, and remained motionless.

Bitterly, like a homesick child, she spurned all this back to which his touch had brought her. She yearned to surrender herself again to that exquisite dream and to the shining reaches of that strange, new land. And yet the vision of it receded. She saw it fading, and figuratively stretched out her arms with a great soul-cry of abject pleading—a pleading that was without pride. Her dream of love had come at last, throbbing, fragrant, sweet.

And now, after such a little while, must the grim realities be faced again!

Allan, both mystified and impatient, regarded her for a moment, nonplused, undecided.

"What's the matter, Ellie?" he asked, solicitously, at last. "Can't you speak to me? I've been telling as well as I could how all this happened, and I swear I don't

know whether you've even heard me or not. If you think I forced Dick—I give you my oath I didn't! Try and believe me, dear; give me the benefit of the doubt—"

His voice, steady, insistent, drilled its way into the girl's half ecstasy so that the state of feeling, light and iridescent as a bubble, was shattered. There was no illusion left now. Here was life, drab, chill, crude.

Suddenly the utter hopelessness of it struck into her soul, and she glimpsed in a moment of hysteria the eons of remorseless time that can exist between each tick of the clock in a life from which everything has gone—an unbearable blank vista with a madhouse at the end.

"Dearest," he was saying patiently, "if there is anything the matter, please tell me. If you are ill, let me get you something. You are not yourself; your face is actually gray. I— See here, you are not cut up this way over Bream's going, are you?"

He paused, and when she made no reply his long-tried patience deserted him. With a bang of his fist on the table that rocked the lamp he burst out:

"Eloise, why don't you answer me? Are you deaf, or do you choose to ignore me entirely? *What* is the matter with you? I demand an answer."

The sudden shock brought her to her feet, palpitating, slender, proud, tortured, one hand pressing down the tumult in her heart.

"Oh, Allan, please!— If you love me— Give me time— Just a little more time— I am trying to think clearly—to answer you."

Her face was a white flame of pain, her voice a reed quivering with it. The fur robe, drawn loosely about her waist by clasping claws, fell open at the throat and showed the pulse of her neck throbbing laboredly.

"Well, *what's the matter with you?* Why should I give you more time?"

Her hand dropped listlessly to her side and her head sank forward for a moment. Then it lifted like a reviving flower on its stem and she looked at him out of level eyes, flame-lit by her unbroken spirit.

"Listen, Allan—" Her voice was low, but thrilled with a timbre of afflatus, of ecstasy. "Listen and I will tell you. To-day — to-night — something has come to

me, something I thought had come once and gone—but which had never come at all! I'm going to tell you, Allan, because I must, I must tell some one." She mastered a wave of mounting emotion. "And you must know. The future. I couldn't go through it if you did not."

Still angry, he glowered at her, disturbed by an inexplicable feeling of having suddenly got out of his depth.

"To-night—I've been in another country, a far, beautiful country, and—oh, I've had to come back again!" she went on simply and tearlessly. "While I was there I thought I heard a voice I loved—a voice that is sweeter to me than any music in the world. But when I listened everything dropped away, and I knew that it was not his voice I heard. Then I remembered that he had gone, that you had let him go, and that I should never see him any more, and—everything seemed to go from my mind. I couldn't think or answer you, Allan."

During a long, silence-stricken minute he looked at her with half-comprehending fear. Then a sudden chill crept down and gripped his very vitals.

"What are you trying to tell me?" he cried loudly. "Are you talking about—Dick—for God's sake?"

To her face came a brave, shadowy smile that just rimmed the verge of tempestuous tears.

"Yes—Dick," she said softly, and then to herself with the tenderness of utter and exquisite abandon: "Oh, dear Dick. It was *his* voice I thought I heard out there—he was hushing me to listen to the warblers and robins and thrushes. We had been happy there since the beginning of things and would be happy until the end of them."

Suddenly, with one swift motion of her hand across her brow, she swept the dream away and a little moan of despair escaped her.

"Oh, I wish I could die! This thing will kill me, Allan!" Her voice sank to a faltering, broken-hearted murmur: "I love him! I love him!"

"Stop! Do you know what you are saying?" Allan gasped, reaching out and shaking her by the arm.

"Yes, I know," she said raptly. "Thank God, I know! But oh, that I should!"

"You—love—him!" he choked and

paused. Then, as if by some chemical agency, his face aged visibly; it became the hue of old parchment and was veined with wrinkles of agony. He seemed to shrink and wither, as if blasted by the heat of some furnace. He swayed on his feet, clutching the table, and his breath rasped in his throat. In one swift cataclysm the dreams that he had so fondly built crashed down into an abyss of despair across which he stared at her.

Then, after a single moment, as cold and quiet as interstellar space, his hold on all that had come into his life to better it seemed to be swept away, and up through him surged a howling, gibbering anger, the primordial, atavistic, tigerish anger of the wronged male. From its stern smoothness his face became twisted and contorted out of all semblance to itself and a maddened, unleashed thing looked out of his flaming eyes.

Still human enough to realize the impulse that consumed him, he reeled back from her, his hands clawlike, prehensile, itching to sink their nails into that tender, white throat.

Fearless, almost inviting the end, she watched him. Presently he quivered as he gave battle to the thing that would master him, quivered and shook with great, sobbing breaths. Then, as the spasm left him, his face gradually smoothed and the wild blaze died out of his eyes.

But savagery was still there, ugly, unforgiving savagery depicted in the sudden sharp outline of the salient jaw and the forward thrust of the head. No longer was he the murderous male, but he was the jealous, stricken-in-pride male, thoroughly human because so thoroughly dominated by his multiple past.

"What is all this? What does it mean?" he demanded. "Out with it!"

Still fearless, beyond the influence of his turgid emotions, communing with the wind-blown flame of her spirit, she heard his command, and, like the virgin saints of the church, poured forth her unstained confession.

"I didn't know that it would come—this way—that it would come at all. I've tried to keep myself—true to what is best. And I suppose I've failed!" A long pause. "But now I see that all I have tried to do and be in the past year has been due to him, and that I've really kept my vision because he would understand."

"And I wouldn't, I suppose. Your husband wouldn't!"

The taunt stung her, and she advanced an impulsive step toward him, looking unwaveringly into his glittering eyes.

"When have you understood me when I needed your understanding?" she cried. "When have you wanted to have something in common with me—to understand? Lately, for a while, you have been kind and good, as you always ought to have been, but do you think that can make up for the awful things of the past—that it can change my heart toward you?"

"Oh, no, it is too late now. There is a part of me that you have never seen, will never see—a part that lies far beneath the surface.

"And we never got beneath the surface, Allan! No, not once. The husks of life were good enough for you and therefore they were good enough for me! I could eat them or starve—and I've *starved*, Allan. But perhaps it was as much my fault as yours. Sometimes I have prayed God to let me die because I had failed so—because there seemed to be a lack in me of power to bring us together. But He did not. Now it is too late—too late!"

Her voice dropped from its passionate intensity to a tone of infinite regret, of compassion. Suddenly Mackenzie stirred as if to speak, and, roused from her darkling mood, she begged for silence with an outstretched arm.

"Please. Let me finish! I said that I must tell you, and I must. Oh, that we should have come to this, we who thought we loved once! But it is better—better than to go on wilfully blind as we have been.

"Oh, please believe, Allan, that I am not angry, that I am not trying to hurt you. But—but to-night things have become clear to me—oh, so clear—and life has come to seem so simple, so wonderful!"

"Just this afternoon Dick said that if one desired a good, true thing long enough and deeply enough, it would come—perhaps not in this life—but some time. And oh, what I have wanted has come at last—too late."

She walked quickly to the window, her head bent, her fingers clenched into fists at her sides. Then, in a moment, with a proud fling of her head, she mastered her emotion and turned back toward him.

A change had come over Allan. In the face of that calm, unswerving loftiness of soul that for his honor had made a sacrifice of its deepest dreams, the primitive savagery had died in his heart, giving place to a miserable punishment. He sank slowly into a chair and leaned forward, rigid, motionless, his face buried in his hands.

"Perhaps I asked too much of life," she said gently. "I asked a great deal—love so beautiful, so perfect that it should be one with the beauty of the stars. Alone in the north, one comes to have strange longings and impossible ideals.

"I had them, and when you came that summer I dreamed you were the realization of them all.

"Oh, can't you see, Allan, can't you see what love was to me then—has always been to me? It was the greatest, noblest adventure in the world—even greater than death itself.

"And when we were married it seemed as if there were endless, wonderful ideals that we could keep bright forever—little things, for I took the big ones for granted. Now can you understand what happened to me afterward—how I seemed to be dying inside, starving to death, in prison when I wanted to fly up and up and up?"

"Oh, I don't blame you too much, Allan, for what came afterward. You didn't know, and I expected more of you than you could give. Our marriage was just a horrible, colossal mistake for us both. I faced that long ago.

"And then, when we were lowest in the mire, *he* came!"

Her voice softened, and once more the shadowy smile touched her lips. Her uplifted face was glorious with ineffable, pure passion.

"Almost from the first day he inspired me, lifted me up! Just his voice, his laugh, were wonderful to me because they rang pure and true.

"In comparison with our own wretched lives his seemed a splendid, beautiful thing! He was like some god, strong, dependable, flaming with truth and honor. He came to be the only thing between me and that—that last great adventure that would have brought me peace.

"Sometimes I think he knew of the death that was spreading inside me—sensed it somehow through all my pride and resistance. He *must* have known,

else he could not have brought us here, giving us another chance and making us equal with himself.

"Oh, Allan, he saved me when everything was gone—showed me that life was not all a lie. He made the sunshine bright and sweet to me again. And books and the trees and the songs of birds all beautiful. Yes, and he did more. He made God real!

"His very presence became the breath of life to me, and I clung to him in spirit like a frightened child, afraid every day that I would slip back again into that awful darkness he had saved me from.

"I suppose I loved him from the moment in that wretched room in Hampton when he asked me to forgive him. He asked forgiveness of *me* when I would have sat by and seen him robbed of his life-work and money and good name! Do you wonder I love him, Allan?

"But if I loved him then, I did not know it—I did not know it till to-night when you said he had gone and would never come back!"

Almost absently she paced once up and down the floor. She could control her voice now, and her face had lost its look of rapt, almost mystical contemplation.

"I—I have told you this, Allan, because you ought to know. It will make easier the life that we must live out together now. For me all this is done; it is past. I have had my perfect moment and it is gone. Something divinely beautiful has come to me, and as long as I live the memory of it will be all the answer that I need of life. I have been blessed above all women! It is enough.

"Between you and me this is past. Neither this night nor his name need ever be mentioned. I am your wife and, if you will have me, I shall try to be to you all that you want me to be. I can do no more!"

She ceased speaking and sank weakly into a chair, her face white, her eyes closed.

There was a long silence.

Finally Mackenzie raised his head from his trembling hands and straightened wearily. His face was drawn and haggard, his eyes but burned-out cinders rimmed by deep circles. He was a man who, disillusioned, gazed upon the bleak barrens of utter despair. He looked at her starkly as she sat fair and flowerlike in her chair.

"Eloise," he whispered hoarsely, "would God had spared me this! But perhaps it is better so. What you have said is true, all of it. The punishment of my life is knowing what ruin I have brought into yours! And I do know—I do. I didn't once, but since coming here I have learned."

He groaned, twisting his damp hands together.

"The past—what I was—is dead. I have changed, and it was the love of you that changed me.

"I have loved you, Eloise, always, as well as I could love. Nothing has really mattered to me, ever, but you. And the fear that I was losing you, the fear that this one good thing in my life—your love—would go from me, changed me, made me a good man.

"That night they thought I was lost—out there in the forest—under the stars—it came to me, and I dreamed of being to you everything you asked of me, of bringing back to your life what I had taken out of it."

He paused for a moment and stared fixedly beyond her, as though from his enraptured sight, too, a vision faded.

"And I tried," he went on at last. "I tried. Not only because I wanted you, but because it was right—for itself."

Swiftly, urged by an overmastering anguish, he came to her and knelt at her feet, his head in her lap.

"Oh, my darling," he cried, "is there nothing for me? No love? No hope? Now—do not think of me now; but later—in all the years to come—will you never love me? Never give me what I might have had?"

A look of utter compassion made tender her face as she gazed down at him, and lifting her hand she let it fall lightly on his hair.

"Oh, Allan, Allan, it is too late!" she cried, voicing all the regret of her lifetime.

For a minute he seemed to sink forward upon her, a dead, lifeless weight. Then, lifting himself, he got to his feet and somehow found the door.

CHAPTER XXI

THE ORDEAL

OUTSIDE, lacking cap, coat, or mittens, and attacked by the penetrating cold, the

instinct for shelter was aroused in Allan. Apparently quite without volition he made for the office and entered it.

Prolonged snores, alternating with whistling breaths, advertised the exhausted but innocent slumbers of Barry. The lights were out and the fire was banked. No one else was in the room. This fact Allan seemed to gather by some sixth sense. Then the long practise of habit dominated his actions so that, unconsciously, he lighted one of the dingy lamps over the desk. A chair placed at an inviting angle near the stove and a half-filled wood-box influenced him to replenish the fire and sit down before it. He sat motionless, hunched over, his hands clasped idly and dangling between his knees, his elbows resting on his thighs.

Dully he watched the fire burn. The flames, visible through a broken square of isinglass, seemed to hold him fascinated. Nothing occupied his mind. For the first time in his life he sat without an active thought—in a brutish apathy, as complete as if some portion of his brain had been removed.

A sense of crushed deadness oppressed him. He could not feel, he could not know, he could only exist like a primitive organism, blind, unendowed with reason, lacking sensibility.

Mechanically, from time to time, he thrust more wood into the fire, and mechanically he drank a dish of tea and shaved his plug and filled his pipe. Stunned, dazed, habit and instinct had their way with him.

Much later, in the bleakest of the small hours, physical and nervous weariness descended upon him, and his guardian angels of the subconscious mind got him to his feet, directed the tinkering with the stove, and propelled him into Bream's bunk. There, under the warm, heavy blankets, he presently sank into a fitful and exhausting sleep.

As a result of this fitfulness his eyes snapped open the minute Rolfe was heard calling the teamsters. Even so, it was some moments before he recognized his comparatively unfamiliar surroundings. Then, since his sleep had, in a way, refreshed his nervous force, he awoke with a fresh and acute realization to memory and understanding.

The past twenty-four hours recalled themselves to him as a succession of ghast-

ly ruins, the future as an illimitable pain and misery. His life seemed to him like a foul abscess on the fair body of the world, and a murderous impulse came to him to fight everything sweet and good, successful and wholesome. A dull, red anger started to smolder in the back of his brain, not an ebullient, seething anger, but a deadly, sullen animosity at everything that found its climax in cursing God. There came an ugly gleam in his eyes, half veiled by the drooping lids, and a certain accenting of lines in his face that lent him an implacable and sinister appearance.

He had just washed in warm water from the top of the stove when a sharp cry echoed through the stirring camp, followed by the squeal of a horse and excited shouts, indicating, he supposed, the usual morning rumpus in the stable.

A few minutes later, however, there came a trampling of feet outside the office and the door was pushed unceremoniously open. Three men entered, carrying a fourth, who was groaning and but half conscious, and whose gnarled body appeared to Allan's quick glance to have been smashed and broken.

"What's the matter?" he demanded, suddenly exasperated by the sight.

"Maje kicked ol' Jimmie," said one of the men. "He's all stove up. Chest caved in, I guess."

The smoldering anger in Mackenzie's mind flared for a minute.

"Damnation!" he growled. "What was the matter with the old fool? Everybody knows that horse is dangerous. We can't have him laid up on our hands now."

With rough tenderness they laid the broken body in Bream's still warm bunk and began to unfasten the clothing.

"Wal, I don't know what you kin do about it," said one respectfully. "Want to take a look at him? Say, he's pretty bad!"

"No. Look after him yourself. I suppose he has got to go down to Abimoming."

"Wouldn't do no good, I guess. Anyway, the sledge ain't up yet."

"Well, here you, Tom," ordered Mackenzie, still infuriated, "take charge of him. The rest of you fellows get your teams out. We can't tie up the whole camp on account of this."

The men thus released looked at their boss a moment in astonishment and tip-toed out.

Mackenzie followed them, feeling an increased bitterness against fate and something akin to hatred for the injured man. His ugly temper, goaded by a persistent consciousness of having done wrong, fed upon itself and colored his every act and word during breakfast and afterward when the work was getting under way.

Intelligence brought to him that old Jimmie would probably die did not change his attitude.

"Hope he does it before the drive starts," he muttered. "We can't be bothered lugging him down the river."

Later in the morning, when his duties had slackened, he sat down, dark-browed and gloomy-eyed, on a stump beside the road and let his thoughts indulge themselves to the full. His mind at once turned to the vivid remembrance of last night's ghastly revelations, particularly in reference to Eloise, and his savage bitterness increased.

Especially unendurable was the thought of her intended loyalty to him, which he conceived to be a plan of refined torture in the guise of a sop to Cerberus. He pictured her going through life, ostentatiously a martyr, keeping him constantly reminded of her uncomplaining endurance; her body his because of a legal ceremony called marriage, but her mind and soul another's by reason of some thrice-cursed driving ideal that he seemed pitifully to lack.

Fine situation! he told himself blasphemously. So moral! So full of the ideal when you came to think of it! He'd have none of that, by Heaven! He'd have everything or nothing! He'd ship her back to her people as soon as this drive was over and live his own life! A lot of good this trying to live like a preacher had brought him! A lot! It had wrecked his life and placed him in a position defenseless from the lowest gossip.

Anyway you looked at it he had got more out of the old days and ways!

He had been cursing beneath his breath, but now he stopped, his eyes half shut, their old, crafty look in them. An idea had occurred to him, and as he considered it his teeth bared in a sneering, half-triumphant grin.

"Bream may be a damned angel, but he is also a damned fool!" he thought, turning on the stump to look about him.

On every hand, farther than he could

pretend to see, the virgin forest stretched away, tall, stately, its pine, hemlock, balsam, spruce, and fir a feast for the eyes. A very king's domain it was, a land grant of the seventeenth century—and the next logical lumber country. In a year's time the world would look toward it expectantly; the Abimoming would become as famous as the Oseko. And it was all controlled by the Y in which he sat, the Y that was worth a startling amount.

The sneer on his face deepened as he followed still further his perverted reasoning. The memory of his parting with Bream recurred to him, and he actually laughed. Stick to the business, eh? Deposit Bream's profits for the year in the Sawpits bank, eh? Pay back the twenty thousand invested when he could, eh? The laugh ended in a snarl as the smoldering flame in his brain again flared up.

Pay back and deposit be damned! Could Bream ever pay back the priceless thing he had stolen from Allan's life—the heart and soul of the one woman he had loved? Never. Little, then, should he trouble himself over a trifling matter of money. Things were in his hands now, and he would make the most of them! He would sell out lock, stock, and barrel. This so-called conscience and honor be cursed! He had never yet found that it paid, and those upon whom he had depended most had defrauded him beyond all the dishonesty he could commit if he lived a thousand years.

Sell out he would for all he could get, and when he went away Bream's capital and profits should go with him!

He speculated regarding the amount he could clean up on the deal. Fifty thousand would never touch a half interest now, he knew; twice that amount would be his bed-rock figure.

Two hundred thousand for the whole outfit and a clear hundred and eighty thousand for himself. A warm thrill of anticipatory revenge ran through him, and his sneer became triumphant.

"And the sooner I can put it through, the better," he thought. "Once I collect from Krug & Lableau on the contract and pay the men I'll be done, and I'll pull out."

He got up from his hard seat and walked slowly home along the road, gazing with comprehending satisfaction at the tall wealth that swayed and bellowed on either side of him in the gusts of wind.

A mile from camp he heard a steady *tinkle-tinkle-tinkle* behind him and turned to see the company dog-train approaching from the south with Quarles, the half-breed driver, trotting beside it. The sight recalled Jimmie's plight to Mackenzie's mind, and he decided to send the injured man to Abimoming at once.

"Might as well be clear of deadwood for the drive," he thought, and waited for the outfit to approach. But it was Quarles who spoke first.

"Mr. Mackenzie," he said, "what is it I hear of Mr. Bream going south? This morning I meet Albert, who runs the trap-line, and he say he see Mr. Bream last night. Mr. Bream like crazy man, he say, and will not stop. He point gun at Albert so that Albert cannot talk."

Allan was startled for a moment by this echo of the night before, but the feeling gave way almost immediately to one of satisfaction. He repeated to the half-breed the story he had told the men and stilled any suspicion in that quarter. Then, as they moved on briskly toward the camp, at a propitious moment he informed the other of the situation in regard to Jimmie and the possibility of an early return to Abimoming.

"I'll let you know after dinner," he said, "so be ready to start."

It was within half an hour of that event when they arrived, and Allan went at once to the office.

As he stepped inside, out of the bright sunshine, his eyes were blinded for a moment, and he moved toward the injured man's bunk more by familiarity with the room than by sight.

Then, when his vision cleared, he found himself almost touching his wife, who was seated at Jimmie's side. Involuntarily he recoiled a little.

"I beg your pardon," he growled sullenly, "I didn't see you at first. My eyes were blinded for the moment." And then, after a slight pause: "How is he?"

Jimmie, who had been lying silent, with his eyes closed, now opened them and gazed at Allan.

"I fear, Mr. Mackenzie," he whispered in his perfect English, "that I shall not last long."

"Oh, don't think that!" was the superficial, deprecating reply. "I'm hoping you will be well enough to travel out on the sledge."

"Oh, that will be impossible, Allan!" cried the girl quickly. "He can't be moved. It is very serious—a lung punctured, I think, by a broken rib. It would be fatal to move him."

"Well, we can't have him tying us up here forever!" Mackenzie retorted with one of his sudden, ugly flare-ups, forgetful for the moment that the old man was conscious. Jimmie's round, calm eyes, deep blue like the sky even in that dim light, opened upon him again without reproach, and the quavering voice proclaimed: "I shall not tie you up very long, Mr. Mackenzie, rest assured of that!"

Furious, but doubly conscious of unworthiness, Allan had the wit to make no reply. Unwilling to acknowledge defeat, he compromised by retreating to the desk, where he pretended to check up the books, Barry being absent, cruising and estimating timber outside the Y.

He had hardly opened the ledger when the conversation—evidently interrupted by his entrance—was resumed by the other two.

"And there was another one I used to love," said the old chore "boy" in a dreamy, reminiscent voice. "It went like this:

*"Maecenas atavis, edite regibus,
O et praesidium et dulce decus meum.
Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum—*

"He knew how to make his friend pay the freight, didn't he? I have often thought that Horace and I might have been good friends, especially over crystal *pocula* filled with that famous Falernian."

"Of course you would!" agreed Eloise gaily, "and between you two and the decanter—"

"Bowl, bowl, *cratera!*" groaned Jimmie in distress at the anachronism. "A crystal one maybe, or a bit of Etruscan pottery. But"—and he paused a moment in amused dismay—"think of being forever without a pipe and 'baccy'! I wonder what they used to do to ease themselves after their peacocks' tongues and humming-bird pies. Well, well. Something, I suppose. But even with the Falernian and all I am glad I lived now. Things have always broken pretty well for me."

Suddenly he began to choke as his lungs filled, and he strangled horribly for a little,

falling back weakly at last, his lips blood-stained.

"Please don't talk, Jimmie," begged Eloise. "It makes things worse."

"Worse!" he whispered with a gallant smile, "why there isn't any bad, even! Old Jimmie lying in a bunk and nursed and talked to by the owner's wife! Think of it! Isn't it some more of my dumb luck? I'd like to know how many men can say as much!"

"Oh, Jimmie—brave soul!"

"Of course"—a look of wistfulness shadowed his wrinkled face—"I've always wanted to get back to the wife, and I've thought—every year—I'd make it. Tried, too. But somehow—with one thing and another—I never got past the drive town, and that meant another year. But, thank goodness, I could always get a job! That was where some more of my luck came in. It isn't every man of my age that can go choring at thirty-five a month regularly, but I never missed. No, Mrs. Mackenzie, some one always hired me."

"And the wife, Jimmie," said Eloise, "wasn't she horribly disappointed?"

"Oh, the wife!" His voice grew vague and a trifle apologetic. "I don't know. Fact is, I haven't heard from her since I came out. But perhaps that was for the best. She had no idea where I was or what I was doing, so she didn't expect me to come. It saved her a lot, I'm sure."

Jimmie's annual iron resolution to ignore the allurements of the drive town and start home to Devon had become a byword in the Oseko country, and there was many a saloon man who would not sell him a drink. But always, after the paying off, there was a traitor on one side of the counter or the other, and Jimmie, helpless after the first taste, like so many of his kind, would forget everything and end his debauch in Dr. Cavanaugh's snake-room under the ministrations of Marty.

Another spasm seized him, longer and more violent than the one before, and for a minute it seemed as if he might lose the fight then and there. Allan, unnerved, sprang from his stool at the last, but the strangling gradually subsided, and he leaned trembling against the counter while Eloise soothed and revived the old man.

Jimmie moaned and cried out suddenly: "The wood-boxes. They aren't filled! What will the boys do?"

"Yes, they are filled," Eloise reassured

him. "Don't think about it. There are plenty of people to look after them, and to wait on you, too."

There was a long silence.

"This year—I would have made it sure!" he whispered at last, his face again wistful for the fruition of his supremest desire. "I could have got by them all—every one—this time. And now—I'll never get the chance."

He sighed, unconscious of the tears that rolled down Eloise's cheeks and fell upon the rough, gray blanket.

There was another long silence, and then, suddenly, his face lighted with a dimly radiant gratitude.

"After all, there's a bit of my luck in that," he said. "If I had got to Devon—and found the wife gone—and all those I knew gone—and everything changed—I couldn't have stood it—no, I couldn't have stood that! It's funny—all my life—how everything has happened—for the best!"

"Oh, it always does, Jimmie! *Everything, always, happens for the best!*"

Mackenzie, standing by the counter, suddenly felt humiliated and ashamed. The memory of his last brutal remark returned to him and filled him with sickening self-disgust. On tiptoe he slunk out of the building, conscious of having violated a sanctuary.

At dinner he told Quarles that Jimmie was unable to be moved, and that the sledge should wait.

Afterward, with no duties demanding his immediate attention, restlessness assailed him and a sudden repugnance for the camp. He hated the thought and look of it and, strapping on his snow-shoes, went for a long tramp through the forest still deep with glittering snow.

The smoldering, red anger at the back of his brain seemed to have died now, and he found himself impotent to resurrect the savage ugliness of his morning mood.

He looked about him at the forest, but now the sight of it did not stir in him illicit greed. He endeavored to arouse his enthusiastic anticipations of revenge, but there was no response within him, no rise. He failed to register inspiration, and what he had dreamed of as a satisfying future looked like a desolate campaign of spite and evil. By the time he had reached an abandoned trapper's hut, the goal of his tramp, the whole thing had taken on the appearance of a fiasco.

This made him angry, and he heartened himself with bravado, but the sense of mental and moral prostration that had fastened upon him overwhelmed this counterfeited enthusiasm the moment he ceased to create it, until at last he faced the miserable knowledge that he was unable to convince even himself of the wisdom of the course he had just mapped out.

Then, suddenly, bitter self-loathing awoke in him, and he felt horribly alone in his evil. He knew that by his actions of the morning he had partially turned his world—the camp—against him, and that there was not a man who did not resent the spirit and authority that he had displayed. A little more such treatment and he saw the end: he would inevitably become a pariah, an outcast, fleeing with stolen money from a world of hatred.

Then the months of whole-hearted sharing in the work and play of his fellow men, an aroused gregarious instinct, reacted, so as to lend this prospect a positive horror in his eyes. He became acutely conscious that his revenge was not worth the taking. The contemplation of a return to his old hunted life revolted him. Having tasted the clear waters of wholesome labor and honest ambition, a draft from the old spring was like gall. He recognized then that the great heaven-shaking desire toward good that had welled up in him once before had really never left him, and that it had been for old Jimmie to stir it from its lethargic sleep.

He recalled Jimmie dying there in the cabin. Of the humble of earth was he, of the unknown and unwanted, one whose enemy had borne him down from level to level, from structure to wreckage. And yet he could say on his death-bed, his great desire unfulfilled: "I've always felt that things broke pretty well for me. It's funny, all my life, how everything has happened for the best!"

That was how Jimmie had met the final "No" to his great desire. And how had he, Allan, met it? By curses and hatred and all the ugly rancor of false standards. Truly, the misshapen vessel from the potter's hands had held the sweeter wine of life!

Allan sat on a windfallen tree beside the deserted cabin and thought of Jimmie, and sought pardon for all the curses with which he had hurried the stumbling feet and overburdened the aching arms. Cer-

tain it is that there is no anguish like the anguish of irremediable regret, and Allan, abased before the memory of the humblest of his servants, knew it to the full. Could he have shed tears, he would have shed them, but they only stung his eyes while they dissolved and washed clean away the hard core of bitterness and hatred in his breast.

Had Jimmie but known it, his life in that moment had achieved a sublime *raison d'être*.

Chastened, Mackenzie's thoughts next turned to those whose images never ceased to haunt his brain—Dick and Eloise. His hurt-pride revolt was subdued now, and he could think of them calmly and, in a measure, impersonally. And thinking, his egotism crumbled like the bank of a flooded river, for in all their actions, in all their pain and longing, they had been true to something above their own desires, a fealty that, for all his good impulses, was still a stranger to Allan.

How much Dick must have loved her, he thought, how much more than *he*, to put aside all for the sake of that intangible thing men call "honor"! How Dick had sacrificed to and for her always! Love to him had been an endless giving. Never could he bear to refuse her anything. Asking nothing, but giving all—true to the spirit, but only human in the flesh—he had loved her and kept the faith.

This was the love of one who had neither received nor sought a response. What, then, should *his* love have been, in whose hands had lain the power to strike the spark from a soul at once steel and fire to the true flint!

Ah, there was his greatest failure and his greatest punishment. In not striking he had laid open the opportunity for others to strike, and now the spark had leaped and lighted an altar fire as undying as it was invisible to him.

An altar fire? Yes, but a vestal flame; far more even than his was her love a secret, virgin ecstasy. Because she was a woman to whom the sound of pursuit is the intimation of love the passion had not reached the pitch of throbbing veins and sleepless nights. For there had been no pursuit. And yet, in other ways, the force created had expressed itself.

What a marvelous side of her Bream had called out!

Spirituality, humanity, dreams; veiled

fire rosy through crystal like a grail; and as unattainable.

Each to the other—Dick to Eloise and Eloise to Dick—they seemed to have flung out antiphonal waves of inspiration and strength, unconscious of Allan, and yet saving him.

There was the core of their conduct! Each living in the dream and worship of the other, had yet guarded *his* honor even through the ultimate anguish of renunciation.

He sat silent, unheeding, unconscious, as the hours passed, and the sun, westering, shot its scattered shafts among the black boles of the trees. The air was musical with the clear flute-notes of a pair of nest-hunting robins, and from somewhere near by came the tinkle of melted snow-water that would cease when the sun went down. But he did not hear them, nor did he feel the chill of the steady west wind that sounded the diapason of the forest.

He could think only of the wretched part he had played in life—his life and theirs. He saw with bowed humility his utter abasement, how he alone of them all was most honored and most unworthy. And there was born in him a deep, reverent adoration of these two who had touched the heights and the depths and were still triumphant. Even as Jimmie were they, only a thousandfold more noble, since their denial had been a thousandfold the greater.

Triumphant sacrifice! That was the patent of their nobility, their reply to the thrown gauntlet of life. And as the glory of it burst upon him there surged up in him, recrudescing from its temporary sleep, a new eagerness for service, for uttermost sacrifice. Just as the passive desire for honor in his economic and social relations with mankind had made impossible his revenge, so now the active desire opened to him the possibility of achievement on the highest plane of the spirit. Only by action of some sort could he atone.

And it was true desire, not a sense of duty merely. Sitting there, stripped of his sham injuries, his hurt pride, and his pricked vanity, a great cry went up from his heart that he might give fully and without stint of that little that had been his life. And, accompanying that desire, completing it and making it perfect, was an everincreasing sense of power, that

sense of power he had felt first that night of his communion with the stars.

Oh, to atone, to expiate, to gain that redemption which he saw now must be gained to bring him tranquillity in life! Let him render the world again to those two who had lost the world that they might gain their own souls!

Their situation in their lives was simple, apparently final, and at the same time unendurable. The end of his romance with Eloise had come. Love her as he did, he could not ask her to carry on the travesty of wifehood that she had offered. Remained for her, then, to return homeward and for him to go on alone to what was left for him.

Bream had gone blindly forth from this, his crowning achievement, throwing aside business, wealth, and future in one frenzied toss. Oh, to make restitution there!

Allan looked with his mind's eye upon this complete but invisible wreckage, this tangled knot of three life-strands that had first crossed at a sand beach in the East River. How frequently, he thought, were such Gordian knots severed by the sword of divorce or abandonment. How easy it was, and how despicable! And yet there had been no thought of either here, nor ever could have been. He, unworthiest of men, stood snow-white through the unquestioning idealism of those others.

Realizing the deadlocked situation, the knowledge came to him that he only could relieve it, and eagerly he sought the means, clamoring to serve these two—the one woman on earth he had ever loved and the one man of whom he thought almost with reverence.

It came to him naturally, gently, and with a feeling of benediction, this means that he sought. Since they had lost the world, let him render the world again to them; let him give them each other.

Peace suddenly fell upon him—a peace of finality, as if after long travel he had reached the end of his journey. He closed his eyes and a sort of ecstasy of renunciation took possession of him, a rare, attenuated joy such as he had never known. It filled his being, flowing through him like a healing ointment in his tortured frame. In that moment it seemed as if he had been made whole in body and spirit.

The inspiration having come, details multiplied with startling rapidity and a course of action formed itself in his mind.

Eager to accomplish, miserly with every second of delay, he sprang to his feet and hurried homeward.

CHAPTER XXII

THE FRUIT OF DECISION

It was just starting to darken when he reached the camp. A yellow light poured weakly from the kitchen windows, but the other cabins were dark, and the little settlement seemed in the failing glow to be touched with a certain poetry. Its raw colors were softened, and it seemed to melt into harmony with its wild surroundings. In his gentle mood Allan found it beautiful, despite all that it had brought into his life. And this feeling was emphasized when he saw men coming from the office with bared heads and downcast eyes. He knew, then, that it had been the setting for Jimmie's last and greatest bit of luck.

He paid his sorrowful respects to the dead, and found to his relief that Eloise had left the room before the end. Now certain things had been done, and the old man lay looking peaceful and content, as if some truth from the other side had sent the soul hurrying back to smooth the wistfulness from his face and furnish an answer to those who could read. Already there were candles burning, and the office had become a sort of mortuary chapel.

Not that Jimmie's passing would draw a single tear or affect a single appetite or defer a single rough jest. Not at all. These were merely the prescribed forms and must be complied with.

Mackenzie found that he had many things to do before he could accomplish what that afternoon he had determined upon doing. First he sought out Quarles, who was tinkering with a sledge near the dogs' wired pen, and over a pipe with him learned what he could of Albert, the half-breed. This French-Indian, it appeared, ran a trap-line in the vicinity of Moonstone Lake and made his headquarters in a shack no great distance therefrom.

Was this shack hard to find?

No; quite easy if one left the lake trail at the proper spot; and Quarles obliged with a map, stick-drawn upon the snow. Allan listened carefully and memorized landmarks, so that when he left the half-breed the map was limned upon his mind. By this time it was dark, and he proceeded

on another matter equally important. This took him to the storehouse, and here, as he had done for Dick but twenty-four hours before—it seemed a week—he got together such provisions as a man would take upon the trail and piled them conveniently near the door.

At this juncture the men, shouting and laughing, came in with their tools and baskets. There was a momentary lull as the passing of Jimmie became known, but presently, when the supper-bell rang, they responded to it heartily (with all respect for the dead) and left Allan free to take the next step in his carefully laid plans. This consisted in a return to the cabin, which he had not entered since the night before, and a hasty examination of his wardrobe.

Eloise, resting in her curtained bunk, worn out with the night and day she had undergone, did not rouse at his entrance, and presently he left the cabin with snowshoes and an armful of clothing. These, with matches extracted from the "van," he added to the provisions in the storehouse.

After supper, a trayful of which he carried to his wife, he found an opportunity to talk with Dorlon.

"I am going away," he said, "for a few days on most urgent business, and I am going to leave you in charge. While I am gone what you say goes. Under the circumstances I cannot take Mrs. Mackenzie, and I shall hold you responsible for her safety and happiness while I am away."

Dorlon, to whom the receiving and obeying of orders was second nature, wondered, perhaps, what might be behind this departure, following, as it did, so closely upon Bream's, but since the reasons had not been vouchsafed he kept his curiosity to himself and pledged his performance of the duties that Mackenzie now proceeded to lay upon him.

"I am going to travel by dog-sledge," continued the owner, "and I want your help in getting away to-morrow morning before the men are up. Mrs. Mackenzie will understand that I am going, but the others do not need to know anything more than that I have gone."

"My duffel is at the storehouse, and I shall load the sledge to-night after the men have turned in. When you have called me in the morning, take the dogs to the

big oak on the road below the camp. You know the one I mean."

"The one by the place we started the first cut?"

"Yes. I will drag the sledge out and we can harness up there. I don't want the whole camp aroused when I go."

"And—er—about Jimmie, Mr. Mackenzie?"

Allan thought a moment.

"Can you read, Pete?" he asked.

"Y-yes, but I make kind of a job of it."

"Well, Mrs. Mackenzie has a prayer-book that she'll loan you, I'm sure. I think you'd better bury him to-morrow. Knock off all hands for the funeral, and afterward get them to work in No. 4 cutting."

"Yes, sir. Anything else?"

"No, I guess not. Only don't forget to call me."

"I won't."

It was half past nine before Allan found the opportunity to draw the smaller of the two company sledges down to the storehouse and load it. As he intended traveling light, the operation was brief, and by ten he was back in the cabin.

He was filled with a feeling of eager, almost joyous anticipation—a feeling that on the morrow would begin for him a new and long-sought emancipation. The deliberate purpose that had characterized his preparations now colored also his mental attitude toward his project, and a grateful calmness of spirit descended upon him. He went to sleep with that peace of well-being that comes after a difficult decision triumphantly made.

It seemed as if he had just got into his first nap when he heard Dorlon's thumping fist and hoarse voice. Weary as he felt from the relaxation following his former strain, he nevertheless sprang out of his bunk with a recurrence of the keen anticipation that had come to him the night before.

He lighted one of the lamps in the living portion of the cabin and turned it low. Then, shivering and seated on the edge of his bunk, he dressed as quickly as his shaking fingers would permit.

Once or twice he glanced toward Eloise and noted her childlike, regular breathing. She appeared to have slept undisturbed through Dorlon's summons, and this pleased him, for he had counted on this habit of her not waking when he rose early,

to prevent complications in his getting away.

Dressed and ready for the trail, he tiptoed softly about the living-room, performing by habit his usual morning duties. He carefully stuffed the stove with wood and opened the drafts, this being calculated to insure comfortable heat by the time Eloise wished to get up. Next he placed one of the chairs, whose ancestor had been a barrel, close to the front of the stove and draped her garments over it, an act of thoughtfulness for her comfort that he never omitted. Then he made a basin of unsatisfactory, lukewarm tea and sat down, pencil in hand, at the table.

From its inception he had felt instinctively that to inform his wife of the plan in his mind was to defeat it; that here was something to be carried through in the uncompromising spirit and zeal of a high duty. Moreover, since the whole new structure of his mind and spirit depended upon its successful issue, he dared not for his own sake submit it to the risk of assault by logic or emotion.

As he meditated there came a savage gust of wind that made the cabin logs creak in their mortises and rattled the windows. A snarling and barking, accompanied by curses and the blows of a club, told him that Dorlon was feeding the dogs. With a gulp at his tea he set himself to write, facing the task of both enlightening Eloise as to his whereabouts and at the same time saving her from alarm.

DEAR ELOISE:

I am leaving camp for a few days on an unforeseen matter of great importance to the firm. Will be back inside a week at most, I hope. Dorlon is responsible for you and is the boss while I am gone. Back him up if the occasion arises. Don't worry about me. I shall see you again soon D. V. (*Deus volens*, as Jimmie might say.) By the way, will you help Dorlon with the funeral if he seems to be getting in deep water? And you might lend him your prayer-book to carry it through, if you will.

He paused, trying to create further material of an impersonal nature and stubbornly refusing to commit to paper the love and longing that went out to her at this parting. Several moments' thought produced no inspiration, and he finally ended the missive with "Yours, Allan," and left it in full view on the table.

The uproar of the dogs he observed now to be in transit, and he knew that Dorlon

was making his difficult way to the rendezvous. There was no time to waste.

With swift, impulsive steps he approached Eloise's bunk and drew aside the curtain with one hand, while a passionate yearning seized him to kiss her good-by. Then a strange thought smote him so that his hand relaxed and the curtain fell before his face. She was no longer his to kiss either in love, in greeting, or in farewell. He turned away, tortured for a moment by mad jealousy. Then the remembrance of his mission returned to him and the bitterness slowly ebbed. With a final glance about he turned out the lamp and tiptoed to the door.

Outside it was sharp, and he could smell the cold. It made his lungs tingle. There was a fading starshine in the sky and a vague, luminous pervasion that could not yet be called light, but that made one feel the passing of blackness. So far no one in the camp except himself and Dorlon had stirred. But even as he jerked at the sledge to start it out of its frozen resting-place the alarm-clock in the kitchen went off and warned him of imminent activity in the camp.

The dogs, restless with cold and eager to be off, made harnessing difficult, but eventually they were subdued, and Allan took his place by the gee-pole, the hood of his *capote* drawn over his head, but with the garment open at the throat.

"Thanks for your help, Dorlon," he said. "I expect to be back in a few days. Look out for things."

"I will," said the other, and without more parley Mackenzie cried to the dogs, and they lunged into the traces with a chorus of eager barks.

Mackenzie had driven dogs often in his past wanderings, but not during the past year, and the first half-mile along the road he used in resurrecting his proficiency in the art. At this point he struck a narrow trail leading off through the forest and turned the dogs into it. Here the work was harder and progress slower, the sledge creaking and straining over the rough ground. They crossed frozen rivulets, struggled up gullies, and pitched over partially buried tree-trunks. At the end of half an hour the luminous disk of Moonstone Lake opened before them, and here Allan called a halt to get his compass bearings by the fast-increasing light. Then he mushed on across the lake, plunging into

the forest again at a tangent from his former course.

Another half-hour of strenuous work and he caught sight of a tumble-down shanty through the trees. A puff of smoke issuing from the stovepipe caused him to heave a sigh of relief.

The tinkling bell attached to the neck of Chinoki, the lead-dog, brought a man dressed in woods garb to the door, and he gazed stolidly at the outfit until Allan spoke to him.

"Yess," he said in response to a query, "I am Albert. You are mebbe who?"

"I am Mr. Mackenzie, of the Bream & Mackenzie camp. May I stop and have breakfast? I want to talk with you."

"Oh, yess. Come in. I help you wize dogs."

"Thanks, I can't wait for that. They'll be all right, I think."

The animals, blown by the hard drive, were lying in the snow, steaming and panting, their red tongues flickering. Mackenzie quickly produced from the sledge food sufficient to pay for what he would eat and followed the other inside.

"Quarles tells me you saw Mr. Bream the other night," he said, while the other poured him a basin of tea.

"Oh—yeas. *Tiens!* He geef me ze scare. For meenute I 'fraid of *loup-garou* when I hear heem come smash t'rough ze brush. Eet was vairy late when I come een from traps and I haf plenty skeens. Eet was good day that day. I was out zere in ze woods, *pas ici*, when I hear heem coming, an' I wait."

Albert handed Mackenzie a tin plate on which were pieces of frizzled salt pork and boiled beans.

"Zen, pouf! Out he come, an' I sees eet ees a man an' I spik to heem. He come close lak he not hear an' I spik to heem *encore*. Zen he hear me an' jump back an' yell: 'Who are you; what you want?'

"Zen I know heem. Eet ees M'sieu' Bream, for I haf seen heem an' talk wize heem plenty time when he hunt. An' I say: 'M'sieu' Bream, eet ees Albert. What ees ze mattair?' An' he go back from me an' say, 'Lemme be!' Zen I 'fraid somesing wrong an' I go to heem, yess, to help, mebbe, an' he, quick like zat! reach for ze *pistolet* an' shout: 'Go 'way from me, dam' you! Don' you foller me!' An' I scairt some more an' stan' still. Zen

he look at me for minute an' turn an' go anuzzer way—sous, sous-east, I sink. An' I stan' an' don't know what to do. I sink he crazy mebbe, an' I ought to foller heem. Zen I sink mebbe my skeen better zan all skeens I have in pack an' come home. I dunno, I dunno!"

Mackenzie considered this story in silence for a few minutes while he went on eating.

"Could you find the place where you saw Mr. Bream?" he asked abruptly.

"Ah, *oui*. Eet ees not far. Eet ees only quarter, mebbe half mile."

Mackenzie put down his plate and basin and reached for his mittens.

"Come on and show it to me," he said, starting toward the door. "I'll make it worth your while. I am trying to find Mr. Bream, and every minute counts. He was ill when you saw him—was not right in the head, you know—and I must find him right away. You're sure you know the place?"

"Oh, yess, *m'sieu*. *Certainement*. *Allons!*"

Outside Mackenzie lightened his load by the weight of a small bag of flour, the promised reward, and got the dogs in motion, following Albert's lead.

After fifteen minutes' tramping along an easily distinguishable trail he came to a halt in a little natural clearing that was surrounded by tamarack and hazel bushes and took a quick survey about to get his bearings. The snow under foot was crusty, and the clearing presented several sets of old tracks, all preserved in a permanent glaze by the daily thaw and freeze. The half-breed walked about slowly, examining these for a little time, always careful not to cross them with fresh marks. Then he seemed to reach a decision.

"Yess, *voici!*" he cried. "So! I come zees way home, an' pouf! he come t'rough bushes at me zere where trail ees come. You see?"

"Yes."

"You see where he stan', turn roun', back up?" Albert indicated a certain spot in the middle of the clearing. "Eet ees all—eh—w'at you say—tramp?"

"Yes."

"Zen eef he stan' zere he go 'way zere, *voilà!* You go roun' behin' bush an' see eef trail go zat way."

Anxiously Mackenzie did as the other directed, and even before he reached it he

saw the solitary tracks winding away from the little clearing into the forest.

"It's here!" he cried excitedly. "It's here, Albert!" and the half-breed joined him, the Indian in him grunting, the French half inclined to volubility.

"Zat ees she!" he pronounced gravely. "Now you find heem—*M'sieu* Bream, *hein?*"

"If he's to be found, I'll find him," swore Allan grimly, and rushed on the dogs. Then he remembered and called his thanks over his shoulder.

The other made no reply, but stood stolidly watching the outfit until it had twisted out of sight among the trees.

After more than an hour's fast traveling Allan came upon what remained of Bream's first camp, a cleared space in the snow, surrounded by trampling in all directions and a few black embers. The sight cheered him wonderfully, for in that spot he seemed somehow to make a first faint connection with the man he sought. He pushed on with the restless eagerness of a trailing hound.

The fever of the chase was strong in him and was multiplied a hundredfold by the fever of high purpose that sustained him. To catch Bream was the only thing that mattered now. Here was the trail, and somewhere there must be an end to it. Would he overtake his man before that end?

The fear that had haunted him ever since his decision the previous afternoon clung to him still—a fear, almost panicky, that Bream would drop completely out of sight before he could be reached. His thirty-six-hour start seemed to magnify itself into an unconquerable handicap.

Yet Mackenzie was not ungrateful to the Providence that had put him on the trail. Through the agency of Albert's late home-coming and weird night meeting with Dick he had obtained his only clue. How much better this was than to face the whole of the province without a scent, as he might have done!

As he pushed on steadily, half trotting, half walking, and occasionally snatching a ride when there was a stretch of level ground, Allan consulted his compass often in an effort to determine the objective point of Bream's flight. The instrument showed that the course was steadily south, but bearing east, a direction which was taking him farther and farther away from

the Abimoming, and which, if pursued, would bring him out at or near Randall, the second Burchard & Hill mill town. The natural features of the course were what study of a map had given him to expect.

Shortly after leaving Albert the trail led across the east branch of the Abimoming and plunged into forest that was really vast uncut Burchard & Hill holdings. The steady up-grade work told Allan that he was conquering the height of land which divided the Abimoming and East River valleys, and the noon halt found him on the crest of a low hill that seemed to mark the actual divide. From this point the trail held a little more easterly and through a country that showed no sign of human occupation except the faded blazes of the original cruisers.

It was mid-afternoon before he found himself again familiar enough with his task of dog-driving to allow his vigilance occasional relaxation, and his mind began to inquire curiously what would be the end of this grueling adventure. But one end gave it excuse for being. Dick must come back. So great had the pressure of Allan's desire to make restitution become that any other ending to the chase was unthinkable. Upon it rested his salvation and the happiness of the other two. Yes, Dick must come back, though he were forced to submit at the point of a gun.

What should become of himself afterward Allan did not know—did not think. He was vaguely aware that he must somehow remove himself effectually from their lives, but how he was to accomplish this he had not speculated.

Naturally there was divorce, an odorous and brutal method, and there was that infinitely preferable (from some aspects) quiet blotting of himself forever from the human stage. But as yet he had given neither of these serious thought, and in this it is conceivable that perhaps there was a note of psychic counsel—as if he felt that some other way out would present itself.

Suicide or divorce in their time, perhaps, but now to catch Bream before he had disappeared into thin air at some railroad town—to catch him and bring him back and render the world again to those who had lost it that they might gain their own souls. That was the great exigency.

And Allan, maintaining the cruel, dri-

ving pace by will-power alone now, cracked his whip over the backs of the straining, panting dogs and shouted them hoarsely on.

How far he traveled, what hardships he invited and endured, how he lost the trail in the dark and spent half a day recovering and identifying it; a description of the hills, streams, and woods he traversed, and his gradual weakening under the unaccustomed physical strain, all make a splendid story. But that story has no place here. The most interesting incident of all after the interview with Albert is the last one—that ended the chase.

He caught Bream.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CROSSING

He ran him down at noon of a raw, cloudy day on the bank of a little stream marked on large scale maps as Black River; a northern tributary of the Oseko, full of rapids and falls, and known to trappers and cruisers as evil water. Bream had stopped to make his midday tea on the left bank, where there was a natural, though hazardous, means of crossing, for the Black River had broken up and gone out and now was rising steadily. Now its channel was swollen and filled with broken ice that revolved slowly as it swept along or piled up in windrows against fallen trees or projecting rocks.

This was not the first open stream that Allan had encountered, for, as his trail had taken him steadily south as well as eastward, he had somewhere crossed that invisible, indeterminate line below which the ice had surrendered to the spring and above which it had not. Here the break-up was final, and the haphazard stepping-stones offered the only dry means of crossing within a dozen miles. Even a raft would have been useless unless launched considerably higher up, for a hundred yards below the crossing there began a frothing, treacherous rapid that brawled for a furlong between the slippery black rocks of a little gorge and spelled disaster to any rudderless craft.

The stepping-stones themselves were the remains of a century-old rock-slide from the cliff above, and even in summer did not offer secure or ample footing. Now the

muttering flood of the Black River freshet was within an inch or two of their jagged surfaces and swept by with dizzying swiftness, leaving a collar of dirty foam about each one. In the very middle of the channel two of the stones had been washed away, leaving a hiatus in the uneven progression that demanded of the traveler a prodigious leap if he would continue his journey.

Allan had been following the hot trail along the river-bank for an hour before he caught sight of Bream, and the picture he saw held him spellbound for a moment. Immediately before him a grim, gray hillock was cleft abruptly and swallowed the Black River with a flash of white teeth that betrayed the head of the rapids. The dark forest, growing close to the water's edge on the flat and low upon the brow of the cliffs, lent a somber gloom to the almost rayless gorge that gave it the appearance of a cavern leading to Inferno.

The only color relief was furnished by lapel-shaped, flat, yellow rock surfaces on either side of the stream and practically level with it, that tapered toward the gorge and ended there.

It was here on the left bank, within a few yards of the stepping-stones, that Dick knelt nursing his little woodsman's fire. His pack was open beside him, the shoulder-straps hanging loose, and his snowshoes leaned against an adjacent boulder, drying. That he did not hear Allan's approach was due both to the noise of the rapids and to the fact that Allan had finally succeeded in getting Chinoki to run without his bell—a precaution taken against premature discovery of pursuit by the quarry and subsequent escape.

Because he had seen the trail grow warmer and warmer before him during the last twelve hours, Allan was prepared for the sight of Bream, but there was no lack of fervency in his silent cry of triumph and thanks when he glimpsed the kneeling man on the yellow rock. Though gaunt and worn by the forced driving, every vestige of weariness seemed to leave him, and he urged on the dogs eagerly.

A hundred yards away Bream heard the approach for the first time and looked quickly over his shoulder. Then, when he saw the dogs, he stood up and turned around, one hand shading his eyes from the gray-white glare as he endeavored to identify this apparent stranger.

Allan drove to the spot where the trail turned out upon the naked, yellow rock and halted the dogs. Then, with a feeling of mingled diffidence and anxiety, he advanced toward Bream. In a moment the latter dropped his hand and gave a violent start, taking a step forward, as if to verify a suspicion that had flashed into his mind. Then a look of incredulous amazement passed over his features as he finally identified Allan. The latter halted his advance and the two stared steadily at each other for several seconds. Dirty, unkempt, their faces covered with stubbly growths of beard, they formed a strange tableau.

At last Bream spoke: "*You, Allan!*" he cried. "Here! Why—I can't believe it! I—why—"

Mackenzie took an impulsive step forward.

"Dick, old man, I'm glad to see you. I've found you at last—" He broke off, halted by a look almost of displeasure on Bream's face. The latter stared for a moment, and then asked:

"Have you been following me?"

There was a brief pause. "Yes. Yes, I have. I had to find you before you disappeared. I *had* to follow you."

Allan, scanning the other's face eagerly, thought he detected a changed expression beneath its unkempt appearance, as if the quiet, brooding peace of nature had commenced already its healing action. Was it that across the brow and in the eyes there was a look of new serenity, the index of a fresh grip?

"In God's name, why?" The question came quietly, but with a protesting vehemence. "Why have you come? *Why?* I thought I had put all that—you and the others—out of my life."

Allan did not answer at once, but when he did it was to beg the question for the moment.

"Give me a hand with the dogs," he said, "and then we'll talk it over."

Bream hesitated, and then complied. Together they unharnessed the animals and Allan fed them. Then he produced food and utensils from his pack and commenced to prepare his own meal. They ate and drank almost in silence. When they had finished and had lighted their pipes, Bream reopened the conversation.

"Well, Allan," he said, "why did you come?"

This time Mackenzie did not hesitate.

"I came," he answered, speaking loudly against the roar of the rapids, "to ask you to go back to the camp. No! Let me finish!" as Bream turned to him abruptly, as if to speak. "After you had gone and the first excitement over it had died down, I got to thinking things over and began to see that you should not have gone at all, that it was a mistake for everybody concerned. I began to feel that I had driven you out and that you ought to be back there—and after I saw that Jimmie couldn't use the sledge—by the way, Dick, Jimmie's dead."

"No! Dead? How'd it happen?"

"That Maje. The ugly horse, you know. Kicked him the morning before I left and knocked him all up. He didn't last the day out."

"Poor old Jimmie! So that was what came to him, eh?"

There was a short, reminiscent pause.

"Well, when I found he couldn't be moved," Mackenzie went on, "I couldn't stand the thought of our—my—having driven you out, and I came after you. I can't stay there knowing what it was that sent you away, Dick. You've got to come back."

Bream's teeth clenched on his pipe for a moment as he thought. Then he removed it from his mouth with a swift gesture.

"I can't do it, Allan," he said. "It's out of the question. I can't and I won't go back to that camp. You ought to have known more than to come after me with any such proposition as that. Why couldn't you let me alone? I'd got away, and I was just beginning to get a hold on things again. Now here you come, stirring everything up and wanting me to go back. It isn't fair to me, Allan. I don't want even to think about it."

Mackenzie had expected opposition, and he had prepared for it. Ever since that first arduous day with the dogs his mind had labored ceaselessly to build up an earnest and logical reasoning by which to overcome it. Now he marshaled his thoughts eagerly, anxiously.

"Look here," he said. "I'm going to admit there is a practical side to my request as well as a moral side. We need you for the drive, Dick. I am back there supposed to take charge of a thing in which I have had absolutely no experience. Of course, you can say I have Borwell and Dorlon, and when you come right down to

facts I suppose it's possible that they could get the drive through. But it's a risk, as you know. Neither one of them has any initiative, and if we got into a hole they would look to me. Then where the devil would I be? Don't you see?

"And that isn't all." He cleared his throat and let the insistent brawl of the white water below have its way for a moment. "I am playing this game straight now, as you know, and my only chance to make money—yours, too, for that matter—is to get our drive through. This indifference of yours to money is a wonderful thing. But, man, is it sense? I'm not capable of it. I want something to show for my year's work."

Bream's face had shown no change of expression as Allan talked, except for a knot in his brow that might have indicated either thought or impatience. This deepened now as Allan went on.

"That sounds selfish, and it is, partly. But it partly isn't, and that part concerns you. Do you actually realize what you are throwing aside, Dick, by refusing to come back? Just this: Success after six years of effort and the first money that doesn't go into another man's pocket."

"Money! Success! Damnation! I don't want them!"

"Perhaps not now, but you will some time. I'm not asking you to do an utterly impossible thing, Dick. I'm only asking you to stick through the drive and see your own work come to completion. Then you can get your money out and go to the other end of the world if you want to."

With an incoherent, guttural growl Bream got to his feet, a very giant of a man if he had not been so thin, and stood watching the black water hurry by the edge of the yellow rock. Then he scowled and, with the quick irritation of his recent breakdown, turned suddenly upon Mackenzie.

"Confound it, have I got to go through all this with you again, Allan?" he burst out. "I've told you that I can't go back there, and I mean it. Why, the very thought of it makes me—oh, can't you understand? Do you think I was fooling with you the other night? I can't do it. You'll have to get through as best you can without me. I won't go back."

His eyes had been fixed abstractedly on the rock at his feet, but now they focused suddenly on the pack lying open before

him. An impulse seized him, and he strode toward it. "And what's more," he said, "I've heard enough of the whole subject. You can't change my mind, and there's no use in your trying. I'm going on, and I'm going now."

Mackenzie in turn sprang to his feet, voicing his protest.

"For Heaven's sake, be reasonable!" he cried. "Hear me out, Dick. That isn't all. There are other reasons why I want you to go back." (All this time he was thinking: "If he only knew! If he only knew!" and calling up his reserve batteries of argument.)

"If I've got to be nasty about this, I will!" he barked with a swift change to anger. "Perhaps you don't know it, but you have played a rather shabby part in this affair. Here's about the situation: You came to a crisis in your life and, incidentally, in the lives of others, and what did you do? You ran away. You shirked your obvious duty both to yourself and to these people. You were weak, afraid! Just as much a coward as the man who hides in battle.

"Now I haven't made much headway with you by reasoning, and I've quit reasoning. But I'll tell you this, Dick, that your place is back there, whether you want it or like it, or find it hard or easy. Until the drive is over, your duty is in that camp, and if you are half the man I think you are you'll finish that pack you're working on and head northwest before I can harness the dogs!"

When Allan had ceased Bream sat back for a moment on his heels and looked up, his face as dark with blood as if some one had struck him. Then, quite unexpectedly, a slow smile broke through what had for the moment appeared to be a gathering storm.

"Allan," he said quietly, "if you are trying to shame me into going back, you are not succeeding. You can't shame me, because my conscience is perfectly clear. I know I did the right thing in coming away, and I know I am doing the right thing in staying away. Not only the right thing, but the easiest thing for us all."

He rose abruptly to his feet and swung his pack up to his shoulders. Fastened to it behind were his snow-shoes, so fixed as to be easily detachable after the crossing.

"I think we have both wasted enough

time on this matter," he added. "Everything you have said, every memory you have stirred, has convinced me more than ever that I should never go back to the camp. I'm sorry to disappoint you, if this does disappoint you, but it's the only answer I can give." He stepped forward and held out his hand. "Good-by; I hope you have all the good luck in the world."

Prompted by instinct to avoid acquiescing in this act of finality, Allan shrank back. In a flash he realized with a sense of dismay that he had failed utterly to convince Bream—that Bream was going on despite everything he had said. It was a new thought, an earth-shaking thought, one that had never entered his consciousness. He had never dreamed that he would return to camp without Dick. Was this to be the end of his sacrifice, his expiation?

"Oh, to tell him the truth, to let him know that *she* wants him!" he thought in that first wild moment of fear, only to put the impossibility from him. Should he even consider such a course, he knew that Bream would defeat it—would be no party to any such sacrifice as he intended making.

He had only one card left, and he played it with all the soul that was in him.

"I'll not let you go!" he cried vehemently. "Dick, for God's sake listen to me. Here's the truth of the thing. I can't carry on that bluff back there any longer. I've had to lie about you—where you went, why you went, when you were coming back, and a thousand others—until my life is just one tissue of lies. And the men know it—everybody knows it. They don't believe what I tell them. Dick—there's—there's talk started already—talk that I can't stand and you shouldn't stand. There's a situation back there that calls for your action, for the action of any man that calls himself a gentleman. You've got to come back as I said you would, or—*Now* do you see?"

Is there such a thing as a sublime lie, a divine sin? Inspired still by that almost mystical fervor that had brought him to his first flaming desire to make reparation, Allan lied. The remembrance of the hopeless suffering that those two had endured for him drove him relentlessly to bring upon himself a meed of that self-same suffering—that by his own pain and giving of himself they might (all unknow-

ing) find joy. What in the end would be the net result of that lie? Would God, weighing the motives against the action, bring an indictment against the struggling soul that told it?

Bream, who had turned away with a shrug after Allan's refusal of his hand, halted in his tracks and half turned back. For the first time his face was changed. It wore an expression of startled anger—anger not at Mackenzie, but at those who, after all his own seeking of the right, had dragged his name and hers through the mud.

"God!" he cried. "The low hounds! Talking, eh? I'll—" He choked with speechless fury for a moment. Then into his face came a look of impotent despair, the look of one who has believed himself strong and finds himself weak.

"Oh—oh, I can't do it!" he cried in agony. "I'm done. It's too much to ask. Go back there and face it all again? God! I couldn't. I'd break—I'd go mad! Talking, you say? Allan, listen to me! If I went back they'd have some reason to talk. Do you understand? I'm broken, I'd show my feelings—I couldn't resist! I—oh, let me out of this!"

With a swift turn he leaped away and almost ran down to the water's edge. The next instant he had begun the crossing, striding carefully but sure-footedly from one to the other of the uneven stepping-stones. At his feet the black water foamed and rushed dizzily by, and the noise from the rapids in the gorge dinned in his ears. But he did not falter.

Mackenzie, taken by surprise, and realizing in a flash that all was lost, threw reason to the winds and whipped his revolver from its holster.

"Back! Come back or I'll shoot!" he screamed.

The sudden cry halted Bream just at the near edge of that great leap across the middle channel where the stones had been washed away, and he turned. When he saw Mackenzie covering him, scorn at Allan's callous indifference to all he had been through, and defiance at this show of force surged through him, and recklessness took the place of prudence.

"Confound you, shoot! Shoot and be damned!" he shouted, and turned back to the jump. Measuring it hastily with his eye, he gathered himself and leaped. Almost on the instant he knew that he was

going to fall short, and with feline quickness he tried to bend his body forward so that he could grasp the projecting rock with his hands as he fell.

But his pack hampered him. He alighted half sprawling, with the fingers of only his right hand clutching the stone. Immediately the tug of the swift current straightened his arm and, as he rose partially from the momentary submersion, he found himself being smothered by the onrush of the water against his face.

For an instant he struggled, and then his fingers slipped. The icy shock of the water had driven the breath from his lungs, and now he began to fight madly for air. But the weight of his pack and the pull of the current held him too deep.

Thought of anything but tasting again the blessed breath of life left him, and he relaxed his feeble hold on the rock and rose to the surface gasping and fighting at his shoulder-straps. The current instantly bore him toward the teeth of the rapids that showed white against the gloom of the gorge a hundred yards away.

All this had taken some five seconds. During the first Allan had stood stock-still, the shock of Bream's fall added to his other whirling emotions. During the second he had dropped his gun to the ground and started forward; during the third he had leaped back for a pack-rope and out to the stepping-stones again; during the fourth he had made his way across them recklessly, and had just made one vain cast with the rope when Bream let go his hold and was swept away.

This time there was no hesitation as to his course, for Allan was a good swimmer. His *capote*, which he had loosened owing to the warmth of the fire, was off in a few swift motions, his cap followed it; his gloves were already ashore. He dreaded the weight of his boots, but dared not stop to remove them. With a swiftly indrawn breath he took the plunge.

When he came gasping to the surface Bream had already drifted twenty yards, and Allan, wallowing toward him through the bits of rotten ice, made out that he was struggling. Instead of swimming (he, also, was a good swimmer) he was thrashing about and turning over and over, catching occasional gulps of air. Then Allan remembered the pack that must be growing heavier and more sodden every moment and redoubled his efforts.

He swam with all his might, aching and gasping with the bitter cold. Then his layers of woolen clothing began to absorb the water and clog his motions. He felt himself gradually pulled down until he could barely lift his arms to swim.

For the first few strokes he had no definite idea what to do with Bream after he had caught him, except attempt to drag him ashore or work into a back eddy that would, for the moment, defeat the current. Then, when his eyes cleared, he saw ahead and to his right a natural breakwater made by a spur of rock extending out from the other bank immediately above the rapids. At once he realized that it offered his only course. There was a bare chance that by a hard, cross-current drive he could make it.

When Bream's head showed next time Allan pounced upon it like a falcon and seized his collar with one hand. Then, swimming with the other, he began the diagonal fight.

Bream struggled. Whether it was still the effort to remove his pack or the paroxysm of drowning, Allan did not know. He could not care. His strength, sapped already by his long, overland journey, was centered in the battle to reach the breakwater. Aside from the weight of his clothes and Bream, he had to overcome natural obstacles in the form of small ice cakes, floating branches, and the hundred dirty miscellanies of freshet water.

He panted and gasped with the effort to move his numbing limbs. Sometimes he choked as a yellow-foamed wavelet slapped into his distended mouth. Then he would fight for air, forgetting to swim, and the relentless stream would bear them swiftly on toward their doom.

It is long in the telling, but it was less than half a minute before Allan knew that they would never make the breakwater—that they would miss it, indeed, by the narrowest of margins. On the instant another truth flashed into his mind, bringing with it an insidious temptation—a temptation that played upon his lifelong fear of physical punishment.

He realized now that if he would abandon Bream he could still save himself. His response showed more than anything else the deep-rooted change that had come into his life. The temptation entered his mind and left it immediately, a pale, harmless thing whose venom had been drawn by

the unconquerable new purpose that filled every fiber of his being.

Still swimming hard, he saw the point of rock that ended the breakwater sweep by him less than two yards away without a qualm. Then, suddenly, as if for the first time, he became aware of the voices of the dancing, white fiends ahead. Instinctively he ceased to swim, and floated, turning himself so as to enter the rapid feet first. Bream, too, he turned on his back and, doing so, saw for a flash of time that in his half-drowned struggle the other had worked the pack almost around to the front and that the harness was twisted and entangled hopelessly. Bream himself, exhausted by effort and submersion, lay almost motionless now, conscious, and saved from drowning only by the fingers that clutched his collar.

The next instant there was a momentary acceleration of the water, a dip, a fling, and they were in the ferment. The sky disappeared in a batter of spray and the black walls of the gorge closed in. Allan became aware of sharp blows on his face and head as hard bits of grinding ice beat upon him, and in a moment he commenced to suffocate. Then he lost his hold on Bream and was fighting for his life.

After that everything resolved itself into a puny struggle against overwhelming odds, carried on in a howling, tossing, white chaos. Though he still kept his senses, all sense of direction, time, place, and sound was lost. Only a single idea persisted in his mind—that he must somehow save Bream. Once, for a moment, he imagined that he saw a dark object ahead of him in the boiling white, and, spurred by his obsession, he strove with dogged courage to go after it.

His stiff fingers had just touched something when he was thrown against a rock with terrific impact, and a wave of agony surged through him. He relaxed, half stunned, only to be aroused again by the suffocation of drowning. He struggled to the surface, gasping.

At this point there was a thirty-yard stretch of smooth water leading to the final rapid, and here Allan again came in contact with Bream. This time, as if in obedience to a subconscious impulse from his former movements, a spasmodic, half-unconscious reflex caused his stiff fingers to clutch the garment of the other in a vise-like grip.

Then there came a violent tossing, another impact, and a second sharp thrust of anguish. For a black space instinct only fought for his life, and he seemed to be passing gently into blankness when sharp needle-prickings stabbed his face and, as if from a far distance, sounded a sharp snapping and crackling.

The stimulus of the pain aroused him, and his senses flickered up to a faint grip on consciousness. He found that he could breathe without effort, and, coughing and choking, he drank in great gulps of air.

After a time he opened his eyes to the sight of yellow, dried pine-needles close to his face and the feeling of solidity beneath his feet. Slowly it came to him that a bend in the river at the lower end of the gorge had swept him into a shallow and against a fallen tree, and that he stood now, breast-deep, in quiet water amid a windrow of ground ice.

With the first return of active consciousness his mind reverted to Bream, and wonderingly he realized that he still gripped him. Looking down at his side he saw Bream, face upward and unconscious, bleeding from a cut on his forehead.

Almost incapable of motion and racked by increasing agony, he yet realized that the other must be got ashore to the beach but four yards away, and he fixed his mind upon the effort. Inch by inch, supporting himself by the limbs of the tree, he started to conquer that seemingly infinite distance. Now and then he paused as a wave of unconsciousness swept over him, but when his senses returned he strove doggedly on, panting, sobbing, and crying out incoherently to the cruel sky and the hungry waters.

As the support of the water left him he fell prone upon the stones of the beach. But after a little he struggled up again and dragged his precious burden ashore, heedless of the blood that streamed hot down his own side. In a delirium of weakness he set about the last task of restoring Bream to consciousness. With a superhuman effort he got him over on his face and pulled the tongue out between the bared teeth to let the water run from the lungs. There was but little, and the sluggish thought came to him out of the lurid phantasm of his agony that the blow on the head as much as the drowning had rendered Bream unconscious.

Then the fire in his brain was snuffed out and a black void engulfed him.

CHAPTER XXIV

ALLAN GAINS HIS POINT

THE two figures lay there like corpses cast up by the river, one straight and prone, the other crumpled upon its side. Streams of water trickled from their clothing and formed tiny rivulets that twisted down among the stones of the beach. Other streams, thicker, darker, pushed their way more slowly and formed black puddles.

The landscape, grim and cold as iron, was cruelly callous and indifferent. Nature showed herself in that mood, the fear of which is stamped upon the souls and graven upon the brows of the wilderness people. The monotonous, senseless brawl of the rapids above typified her unconcern in this matter of the life and death of two divine beings reported to have been made in the image of God.

Presently the larger of the two men stirred faintly and gave vent to a choking groan. A few minutes later his fingers twitched convulsively and his eyelids quivered. His raucous gaspings for breath became louder and more frequent, and presently his whole body stirred as if he were turning in his sleep. His distended mouth opened and shut spasmodically like that of a fish and his eyes rolled under his eyelids. Dick Bream was experiencing the torture of a return to consciousness, unassisted, from a semi-drowned condition.

At last his filmed and red-rimmed eyes quivered open in a blank stare, and his face began to lose its livid hue as the straining lungs supplied the blood with oxygen. For several minutes he lay panting on the edge of consciousness, and then, as easily as one steps across an unmarked boundary line, he slipped into the possession of his senses.

He licked his gummy lips, swallowed hard two or three times, and lay perfectly still. He was overwhelmed by a deathly lassitude and weakness almost to the point of nausea, for now the full force of reaction from the shock of what he had undergone swept over him.

When he had conquered this somewhat, he struggled painfully to a sitting posture, his garments feeling like an icy shell about his numb, almost helpless body. Then, as

he stared stupidly at the slope of the rocky bank before him, a feeling of strange warmth on one of his pinched, freezing hands drew his attention, and he slowly made out that the dark drops splashing upon it were blood. A blurring of his vision next localized the injury on his forehead and, with the idea of binding it, he fumbled at his neck for the bandanna that he wore beneath his mackinaw.

But his fingers encountered an unexpected resistance, a baffling complexity of twisted straps. He looked down and discovered a torn and battered object suspended from his shoulders—an object the sight of which at first struck no note of meaning in his mind. Then, presently, the word "pack" oozed slowly into recognition and his memory received the first stimulus.

The corollary to "pack" was "snow-shoes," and he asked himself vaguely regarding those that he had fastened to this wreck now hanging upon his chest.

In this way, gradually, step by step, he regained his associations of time, place, and fact, and reconstructed with infinite pain the memory of the ordeal through which he had passed. He recalled his carelessness at the leap of the crossing and his clinging to the rock with one hand; the forced release of his hold and the seemingly endless struggle with his pack. Then, quite vividly, came the life-saving clutch that had lifted his head above water in that black moment when it seemed as if he must drown.

Whose clutch had that been?

He answered the question with another. Whose but Allan's?—since Allan was probably the only human being within fifty miles of the gorge. He vaguely recalled now Allan's reckless but vain run across the stepping-stones the moment he, Bream, had been forced to let go his hold. The deduction was obvious. Allan had jumped in after him and saved his life. If so, where was Allan now?

The thought moved him to action, and he turned slowly about as he sat searching the beach with his bloodshot eyes. Finally a brown, motionless heap almost behind him drew his attention, and an instant later he realized that here was Allan, crumpled, bleeding, corpse-like.

The ingrained wilderness instinct to help stirred in him, and he sought to go to the other. At the first movement his stiff,

battered body cried out protest from a hundred bruises and hurts, and he sat back again racked with pain. But the pain had its effect. It brought him fully to his senses and forced a clear realization of his responsibility upon him.

As by a sudden insight he saw Nature, calm, inexorable, waiting for his struggle against her to begin. His backbone stiffened and he picked up the gage that she had thrown. It was life and death now.

Again he essayed motion, and got to his hands and knees, grinding his teeth with agony. But now the pack that had hung against his chest dangled in front of him and impeded his movements. Cursing disconnectedly in a kind of puerile rage, he sat down again and attacked the freezing buckles and stiff straps with his fingers, having searched in vain for his knife. It was removed at last, and after he had bound the cut on his forehead he started once more.

This time he was successful, and crawled to Allan's side. One glance at his ghastly face and a hasty examination of his hurts told Bream that here was a case in desperate need of attention.

In this he was only partially successful. He found, however, that there had been great loss of blood from a jagged, open wound in the side, and he also suspected several broken bones.

Necessity cleared Bream's mind and spurred his faculties. He knew that the one great and immediate need for them both was a roaring fire, but he dared not neglect Allan for the length of time necessary to collect wood and start it. He did the next best thing; he crawled back to the discarded pack and overhauled it for odds and ends that he could use as bandages—a cotton flour-sack, spread already with a pasty poultice, one woolen sock, and his red neck-muffler. Even as he sought these the thought came to him that perhaps he owed his wholeness of body to the protection the broken and battered knapsack had afforded in that smashing whirl through the rapids.

Now, as he busied himself, the enforced exercise, torture though it was, flexed his stiff, bruised muscles and gradually brought back to him ease and celerity of motion. Every moment found his blood moving a little faster, and presently he found that he could walk, though uncertainly.

When he temporarily stayed Allan's loss of blood he set about the business of the fire. He found his hand-ax still in its leather thong at his hip.

Untwisting and releasing it, he lopped a few twigs of dead pine from the fallen tree that had ended their course downstream and heaped them on a bare, flat stone near Allan. Then he felt for matches. It was the critical moment. They were there in the waterproof pocket of his mackinaw, a whole box of them, neatly tied in their rubber case. A sigh of inexpressible relief escaped him, and his fingers fumbled eagerly with the box. And yet, despite their double protection, the matches were damp, and he flaked off the heads of a score before one struck. Then, with all the skill at his command, he nursed the tiny blaze until it was crackling merrily and he dared go for more wood. In fifteen minutes he was basking gratefully before a roaring fire.

Now, while his own clothes dried upon him and his vitality flowed gradually back, he turned his attention once more to Allan. He cleansed the wounds with cold water and adjusted the bandages more securely, at the same time making a second and more careful search for injuries. This confirmed his former suspicion of broken bones, and with the limited means at his command he tried to set them without help. But he found himself faced by problems beyond his rough, surgical skill to solve, and his concern for Allan increased. When he had done what he could he sought to dry the other's clothes as quickly as possible, and to this end supported him upright, so that the heat of the fire played over him.

The realization of Mackenzie's condition brought back to him more vividly than anything else could have done the details of the desperate adventure through which they had both passed, and drove home to his mind the knowledge that Allan had beyond question saved his life. The thought stirred him deeply, and looking into the wan, unconscious face against his breast, a warm emotion that was akin to tenderness welled up in him. It was less gratitude (for even now Bream had no special desire to live) than the free, generous tribute of one brave man to the great effort of another.

He remembered how they had been about to part in the heat of anger and

struggle for command, and he recalled, too, all that had taken place in the past to divide them. And over against these facts he set this deed that had recked of neither—this sublime response to a challenge that had demanded of Allan the highest abnegation of self. The splendid courage of that response filled him with a sort of reverent admiration and spurred him to do his utmost.

"It's turn about now," he told himself, "and I'll pull you through, if it's in me, old fellow."

When the clothes of both had become reasonably dry and there was still no sign from Allan of returning consciousness, Bream's concern was further increased. He realized that hot food and drink were absolutely necessary to them both, and became aware of his totally destitute condition.

As things were, he could not even give Allan a dish of hot water, for all his own utensils had been lost in the rapid. On the other hand, Mackenzie's equipment was at the head of the gorge. Obviously there was but one thing to do: go after it.

Quickly he made his preparations. He cut a pile of boughs and laid the unconscious man upon them at a safe distance from the fire. Then he heaped the fire with wood and laid another huge pile near it. He connected the two by a slow-burning stick, so that when one had burned down the other would catch and blaze.

Then, without snow-shoes, he clambered up the bank and entered the forest, laying his course back along the brow of the cliff that formed one side of the gorge. He found now that his own weakness had to be reckoned with, and his progress was slow and labored. But at the end of half an hour he descended the hill that marked the head of the rapid, and a few minutes later reached what had been their noonday camp.

Because the dogs had fortunately been fastened at the edge of the forest, and had been unable to rifle Allan's pack, he found the supplies intact. In quick succession he threw things together, donned his companion's snow-shoes, and whipped the dogs into harness. Then, with the pack strapped to the sledge, he started on the return journey, driving the dogs before him.

When he reached the beach again he found the second fire burning fiercely and

the first reduced to a mass of glowing coals. Upon these he immediately set the teapot filled with water. Then he knelt beside Allan. It was plain that, though the latter breathed more regularly, he had not yet returned to consciousness, and Bream set himself to apply what restorative methods he knew.

In a few minutes the water was boiling, and he threw into the teapot pinch after pinch of tea. When it had brewed and cooled a little he drank off a huge basin of the potent stuff and with difficulty forced some of it down Allan's throat with a tin spoon. It had the desired effect. He choked and coughed, and at last his eyelids fluttered feebly. Bream talked to him, calling him by name, and at the same time forced him to drink more tea. Signs of returning intelligence became more numerous, and at last his eyes looked up into Bream's.

"There you are, old chap," the latter cried heartily. "Drink some more of this stuff. It'll make a man of you yet. Fine! fine! Feel better now? You'll be all right in a bit."

Suddenly Mackenzie's face convulsed.

"Wait! Hang on! I've got the rope! Hang on! Oh, my God!" His voice was wild, and he strove desperately to sit up. Then the agony of his broken body made itself felt and he sank down again, groaning.

"Steady, steady," said Bream, unnerved in spite of himself. "That's all over now. Don't think any more about it. I'm all right. I'm here. We're both safe."

His voice seemed to calm Mackenzie, and this time his eyes sought Bream's face with understanding.

"Dick!" he exclaimed faintly, with a relieved smile. "Then I *did* get you."

"Get me? I guess yes. You saved my life. But now I've got *you*, and I'm going to take care of you. You're pretty badly knocked up, but you're good for a lot more yet or I'm much mistaken. We're going to make tracks for camp as fast as we can, and then you'll be in good hands. It's as near as a settlement, and it's the place for you."

The intelligence in Allan's eyes flickered, and he muttered:

"Put the men to work in No. 4 cutting." And then, a minute later: "Eloise. Eloise."

"Yes, yes," said Bream, as he would

have spoken to a sick child, "you shall see Eloise. She shall take care of you." He inserted an arm under the other's head and lifted it. "Here's some soup I've made for you. Try and drink a little of it. It is hot and will do you good."

Half unconsciously Mackenzie obeyed, and then sank back into a stuporlike, sick sleep. By the time Bream had made the necessary preparations for the journey his cheeks were hot and bright with fever and he was muttering deliriously.

Bream looked at him critically for a moment before lifting and strapping him to the sledge.

"It always comes after broken bones," he thought. "Lord! If there had only been some one to help me, I could have set them here. It's rotten bad luck. But we won't be so long. I'm sure we can save him yet."

CHAPTER XXV

"ONCE YET, THIS ONE POOR TIME"

—*Before Parting*

PETE ROLFE and Dorlon sat in the kitchen of the camp. The cook kept one eye balefully upon Larry, his potato-peeling assistant, and the other upon a huge range which would soon be delivered of a litter of pies. The foreman sucked at the triangle of plug in his left cheek and aimed the result with considerable success at the nearest sawdust box.

"I never see such a damned spell of weather," he remarked. "We been held up on this drive ten days now, an' it don't look like there was a break in sight."

"You must hanker fer ice-bathin' an' sleepin' in tents," returned Rolfe contrarily. "I don't. That wannigan don't lure me none. I never set up to be no Jack tar."

"But you got to do it some time. What's the difference when it is? The way things stand now, we'll be awful late with our Krug & Lableau contract. I'd like to go out to-morrer."

Rolfe removed his speculative eye from the stove and fixed both balefully upon the cookee.

"Hear that, Larry?" he observed solicitously. "'Our contract with Krug & Lableau,' he says. That's how folks talks when they git all puffed up with somethin' beside good vittles. Take warnin'. Don't you ever get thinkin' you're

the cook when I go 'way of an afternoon. See?"

"Yeah," assented Larry.

"An', Larry," suggested Dorlon, sniffing significantly, "don't ever figger you'll be a dentist an' pull teeth if you don't know enough to pull pies out o' the oven when they're done."

Rolfe leaped for the stove and for the next few minutes was busy with the rescue. Dorlon got to his feet and rolled to the window, after which he paced up and down meditatively.

"Mebbe I didn't sign the contract," he said when Rolfe had subsided. "But I might as well have, for all the owners care. I never see such a way to run a camp. Mebbe if I git sick or Al drowns or Larry there croaks after one o' your minch pies, they'd put you in charge, Doc."

"Nope, not me," retorted the cook blandly. "Not while you was still on earth, Pete. They'd keep me busy cookin' to celebrate your wake."

Dorlon grinned in spite of himself and turned away to hide the concession. Rolfe was undeniably in form.

"Come up! Come up! Say somethin'!" gibed the cook after a moment. "I lose track o' the conversation while you're suckin' wind."

"Wal, y'ole woman, *have* yer last word, if ye want it," snarled the boss exasperated. "All I got to say is that this camp ain't bein' run right. What the devil do the owners want to go chasin' off at this time o' year fer? It's none o' my business, but it's all wrong. It plays be-dam with the men more every day. They're sojerin'."

"Wal," counseled Rolfe, "you knock a couple of 'em ag'in' stout pine-trees an' you won't see so much sojerin'. It's the boss that counts every time, ain't it, Larry?"

Leering, he turned for confirmation toward his slavey's chair only to find the nest empty and the bird flown, leaving half the potatoes unpeeled. It was plain that during the excitement over the pies the hardy youth had made good his escape.

Dorlon burst into a bellow of laughter that rattled the tins on the wall as Rolfe ran cursing to the door and flung it open. The cook scanned the upper half of the camp eagerly, but finding no sign of the

truant, directed his gaze toward the lower end. As he did so the blasphemies dwindled on his lips, and he stared curiously at something evidently other than the boy that had met his eye.

"Hey, Pete, come 'ere," he said over his shoulder. "Here's a funny one comin'. Wonder is it a hobo?"

Dorlon joined him and stared unenlightened at the strange-looking man who was now plodding up past the stable.

"No hoboes this time o' year," he said oracularly. "Preacher, mebbe."

"Naw! Preachers don't walk all ramshackle thataway," argued the cook. "Might be a jack with a hang-over, lookin' fer a job. Let's go down an' see. P'raps he's saw your sojers drillin' in a medder without their general."

"Or your boy pickin' flowers 'long the roadside," came the quick counter, and Rolfe looked up with an expression of pained surprise on his face. He had not suspected Dorlon as one who took unfair advantage.

A half-minute brought them close enough to the stranger to see him well. He was tall and broad-shouldered, but gaunt, and his clothes were dirty and torn. His eyes were sunk in deep, dark sockets, and a partially healed wound showed upon his forehead. The lower part of his face was covered with a half-grown beard. He walked draggingly, as if each step was an effort.

"Well," began Dorlon, and stopped abruptly to squint and look more closely. Then: "By God! if it ain't Mr. Bream!" he bellowed and ran forward, Rolfe at his heels.

Bream, who had seen their approach, barely acknowledged their greetings.

"Hello, boys," he said in a dead voice. "Where's Mrs. Mackenzie?"

"What the—what's happened to you, chief?" cried Dorlon, scarcely crediting his eyes. "Say, you're all in! Let me give you a hand. What've you been doin' to yerself?"

"Where's Mrs. Mackenzie?" repeated Bream, raising his voice and fixing the foreman with a leaden eye, into which a spark had come.

"She's in the cabin," volunteered Rolfe. "Shall I let her know you're here?"

"No, I'll go there myself."

"Say, can I do anything? Has anything happened?" persisted Rolfe.

"Yes, something has happened. I must see Mrs. Mackenzie," repeated Bream doggedly, and plodded past them toward the cabin.

Arrived there, he knocked at the door firmly, at the same time standing in an attitude of almost intolerable weariness, his body bowed a little, his head sunk forward. Almost immediately the door opened and she stood before him. He lifted his head slowly, removed his fur cap, and stood looking at her. No emotion swayed him except the desperate urgency of his message and the mission that had brought him.

For a moment she recoiled slightly as at the sight of a stranger. Then, beneath his dirt, his tatters, his beard and his gaunt weariness she recognized him and an involuntary, shocked cry escaped her.

"*Dick! You!* B-but what has happened to you? What have you done to make you— Dick, you're not well! I don't believe that doctor—" She broke off suddenly, feeling herself tactless in her reception of him, and held out both hands with girlish frankness. "But I *am* glad to see you; it's just splendid to have you back!"

He did not smile as he took her fingers in his incredibly rough, cracked hands—only looked at her solemnly, almost pleadingly. Suddenly a swift intuition told her that something was amiss here—something she could not determine. In his look and manner were a subtle warning and foreboding.

"Get your things and come with me, please," he said quietly. "There's not a moment to lose."

She paled slowly as his words and tone added fuel to the fire of her fear, and her eyes grew wide with dread of the unknown.

"Dick, what is it? You frighten me!" she cried. "What has happened?"

"Allan," he replied. "He is dangerously ill. I left him at the half-breed Albert's cabin. I didn't dare bring him any farther. We were coming back together from the south. Albert is with him now." And then, as she stood transfixed, staring at him, his patience broke: "Don't stand there like that!" he commanded. "*Hurry!*"

The tone galvanized her into action and she turned back into the cabin. For a moment he heard her running about.

"Snow-shoes?"

"Yes."

The next instant she was out and had closed the door behind her. When she had shod herself and risen, they traversed the length of the camp in silence, both oblivious of Rolfe and Dorlon standing awkward and mystified by the teamsters' bunk-house.

"Now, tell me—what is it?" she said steadily, when they had turned off into the trail to Moonstone Lake, that same trail they had taken together on one other day—a day that now seemed ages past.

He did not look at her as he plodded wearily on, but there was infinite pity and gentleness in the conventional question he asked:

"Can you stand bad news? I might as well tell you as let you find out."

"Yes," she answered unflinchingly, "what is it?"

"I—I don't think Allan"—he hesitated—"will live very long."

There was a stricken silence, but no diminution of her pace.

"And that is why you did not bring him—home?" she asked after a little.

"Yes. But it's the pneumonia more than the broken bones that is killing him. We could have pulled him through with those."

"Oh, Allan, Allan!" she burst out suddenly, and then bit her lips, fighting for control. After fifty yards of silent trudging she asked quietly:

"How did it happen? Was there an accident? Tell me everything, please."

Battling with the exhaustion that weighed him down he set his sluggish mind to the task. He answered heavily, almost in a monotone:

"It was a few days after I took the trail south from here; I was sick of this place, I couldn't stand it any longer. One day Allan caught up with me at noon. He had been following me with the dogs and sledge. He wanted me to come back; tried to get me to come back to help with the drive. He said he was afraid we wouldn't get our money out, because he had never bossed a drive."

"And were you coming?" interrupted the girl, into whose whirling mind had leaped a dozen distraught interpretations of Allan's action.

"No; that was the trouble. I told him I wouldn't come. We were at the big gorge on the Black River over in Oseko—

at the stepping-stones: It is a dirty place, all stone and deep water and a nasty rapid below. I told him I wouldn't come back, and had just started to cross when he yelled at me. I bungled the jump and went into the water, but I managed to grab a rock and hold on for a minute. Then my pack forced me to let go.

"Well, Allan jumped in after me and grabbed me. He's been delirious a lot and talking, and I know how he tried to get us ashore. But he couldn't quite make it, and there was nothing to do but take the rapids. Right there he could have saved himself, but he wouldn't. Instead, he saved me from drowning, and now he's going to die. God! I wasn't worth it, Eloise, I wasn't!"

He paused a moment and then went on:

"My pack saved me coming through the rapids, but nothing saved him. He was terribly hurt. But in spite of that he dragged me to the beach before he collapsed. I came to first, and as soon as I could I started back with him. And I haven't slept since.

"The pneumonia came on him the first night. That was something I hadn't counted on, and I had nothing to fight it with. I could have turned and headed for a settlement, but he kept calling for you constantly, and I promised I would get him here so he could see you. Either way, he wouldn't have had a chance. Now we have done everything possible at the cabin."

He broke off abruptly, and into her mind there came for a moment the thought that this man was still true to his trust; that he had never yet failed either Allan or herself in their hour of need.

Then her thought returned to her husband and found a new poignancy in the contemplation of him. The numbness of the first shock was wearing off now, and suddenly she began to feel the significance of this thing that had come to her.

"Allan dying!" she cried with sudden piercing sharpness. "Dick, I can't believe it; I can't realize it. Is there no hope for him? There *must* be hope!"

Bream, miserable at sight of her anguish, but helpless, could do nothing but reiterate his conviction and try to soothe her. He told her again of Allan's splendid self-sacrifice and unquestioning courage, and touched the deed with glory by his reverent sincerity, so that her heart was upborne by the shining splendor of it.

When they arrived at the cabin the half-breed met them at the door bareheaded and on tiptoe.

"He ees come to, now, yess," he whispered hoarsely. "He know me, Albert."

Quietly the two entered, the other following them.

It was a humble interior. A glowing stove occupied the center of the floor, and along one side extended the rough, hard bunk upon which Mackenzie lay. In one corner were a few boxes of provisions, and in another a pile of cleaned and dried skins; near them a few steel traps in the process of mending, and upon wall-pegs mittens, cap, *capote*, and snow-shoes.

Eloise advanced quickly to the bunk, but Bream detained the half-breed near the door.

"Go back to the camp and get them to bring a horse and sledge," he directed in a low tone. And then, with a look toward Allan: "Do you think he will live long?"

The other shook his head.

"No, eet ees ze las' bright before ze dark," he said.

When he had gone Bream sat down upon a provision-box in the corner and buried his face in his hands, overwhelmed by the cumulative exhaustion of his days and nights of sleeplessness and hardship.

Eloise, stopping beside the bunk, looked down to find Allan's eyes closed and his sterterous breathing painfully labored. But, almost instantly, as if her calm, strong presence had forced a message to his clouded brain, he turned his head slowly and his eyelids opened. Then his whole face lighted.

"Dearest!" he whispered. "At last!"

Smiling the sweet smile that he had always loved, she knelt on the rough board floor beside the bunk.

"My husband!" she murmured; "my brave, brave husband!"

The old look of wistfulness crept over his pinched face and he sighed.

"I tried so hard," he said. "I wanted to give something to you—sacrifice! You gave so much for me. I didn't know it would be that way—in the river!"

"Oh, Allan, it was noble, splendid!" Her voice was vibrant with tenderness. "Dick has told me all about it, and how you could have saved yourself, but you would not. And how you saved him. It makes me proud, proud!"

Moved, ennobled by his wistful devotion, his humble laying at her feet of this, his supreme attempt to be worthy of her, she poured out upon him all the richness of her praise and understanding. For him it seemed a breaking of the alabaster box and outflooding of precious ointment upon his yearning soul; and as she spoke there overspread his face a look of serene, triumphant peace.

"Always," he breathed, "since that night—when I came—to know—I have wanted to be—just for a minute—equal to the ideal—you had of me once."

"And you have, Allan, you have!" she cried with all the conviction of her soul, and mastered the impulse to weep that ached in her throat.

Oh, to let him know, she thought—to convince him before he died—that he had truly fulfilled her highest vision of manhood!

"Allan dear!" she cried softly, "do you think I don't know—don't appreciate what you have done? I am humble before it even while I am proud. And what came into your life and changed it! Do you think I have not realized the splendor of that? Ah, that was an ideal! And you were true, steadfastly true to it! Dear, dear Allan! You have seen the highest things and desired them because they were the highest, and you have given your life in proof of it. Oh, what greater ideal and realization could there be than that?"

His face was alight now with the radiance of his inward peace and a rapt, ethereal joy.

"It has come—at last," he sighed, "this that I have wanted—so! You believe in me! Things *do* come, don't they—somehow—some time?"

"Yes, dear, yes. We cannot know how or when, but they come—if the longing is only in us."

"I did not know—until so late!"

"Ah, but the longing came, and that is what counts. It is the sweetest knowledge that you ever brought me, Allan—that and your triumph. Everything else is swept away, forgotten—only that sweet knowledge remains and will remain!"

His hand in which hers lay tightened faintly and the voice that came to her was barely audible.

"Oh, my dear—my dearest dear—Eloise!"

He sighed once again, there was the

feeblest of struggles, and he had ceased to breathe.

So suddenly and peacefully had he slipped away that it was a minute before Eloise realized the truth. Then the control that had borne her through so much gave way, and she bowed herself above that wretched pallet in convulsive grief.

Bream, to whom had come only the low murmur of their voices, sprang from his seat, startled by the violence of her outburst, and approached the bed. Almost instantly he knew what had happened, and he stood for a long moment gazing with tear-dimmed eyes at the triumphant and still radiant face of his friend. Then, closing the eyes, he drew the gray blanket gently over it, and, lifting Eloise tenderly to her feet, led her away.

CHAPTER XXVI

A FLASH IN THE DARK

THE next thirty-six hours were mostly oblivion to Bream, for, with his great task done, outraged Nature took her toll and he lay stupefied with sleep in his former office-bunk while the life of the camp moved on clumsy toes about him.

Only on the morning of the second day did he return to complete consciousness, and when he did he found that Allan's funeral was but a few hours distant, and that to him had fallen the lot of rendering this last earthly service. So complete had been his exhaustion and oblivion that the past, whose facts swiftly returned to him, seemed unreal, untrue. For a while he could not quite accustom himself to the state of things as they were now. Then the thought of Eloise alone during all these dark hours smote him into guilty shame.

Very real, however, seemed the funeral service held later, deep in the forest, as Allan had requested in a lucid moment. So vivid was it that ever after, during his life, Bream could recall every detail at the slightest summons—the bearded, rough men, bareheaded and in a semicircle; Eloise, hooded closely, slender and frail-looking in their midst, with Dorlon awkwardly sympathetic at her side; the yawning, oblong grave, thawed and dug with great labor through the frozen ground; the plain pine coffin beside it; the black trees against the inevitable snow; the blinding,

grayish-white sky, and, strangely enough, the single bright-eyed squirrel clattering about a tree-trunk, who scolded jeeringly across the words that Bream read as he faced them all:

"Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live and is full of misery."

At the commitment, when the frozen clods resounded heart-breakingly upon the yellow box, Eloise, who had borne bravely through it all until this, moaned piteously and broke into terrible, racking, almost soundless weeping, and Bream, hurt doubly by every pang she suffered, faltered and all but ceased to read.

But he finished somehow, and after the last painful "Amen" there was a moment's hesitating silence. Then, catching sight of the girl's quivering, pitiful face, he stepped to her side and gently turned her away from the last obliteration, urging her nerveless limbs into motion. His heart was aflame with pity for her, and his impotence to lighten her burden lashed him into a frenzy. All the love that had ever stirred in him rose in a great, aching cry that God should let him take her pain and that she should know surcease.

He led her slowly back to the little cabin (it seemed somehow strangely different and desolate now) and stood by the door while she went in.

"Oh, don't leave me, Dick," she pleaded, suddenly smitten with a new realization of her loneliness. "Come in and talk to me. Do something, say something! Just for a little while—just till I get used—to things."

Wretched though the very sight of her wan, tear-stained face made him, he could not refuse. Supersensitive to her hurt, he anticipated every pang of this first hour of complete detachment from Allan. Though she had not loved him, yet the threads of their lives had been interwoven closely. In sickness and in health, in good report and ill, they had never parted, and now the suddenly torn habits of years would protest in bitter pain. He knew that she must look expectantly toward his chair, only to find it empty; listen instinctively for the sound of his step, only to remember that he would never come again; be startled to cruel disappointment by the phantom of his voice, a product of her own imagination; and that she shrank from these things like a delicate child from suffering.

So, entering the cabin, he accepted her weak, almost childlike dependence upon his strength and support. He made her comfortable in a chair with a blanket across her knees; he poked up the stove until the fire roared and bustled busily about the making of tea.

And meanwhile he talked. As he had taken charge of her resistless body, so he took charge of her resistless mind. He led it gently from one topic to another, kept it constantly on the move, afforded it no opportunity to settle or brood. And yet he avoided no references to past or present events. He spoke often of Allan, referring particularly to the undying splendor of his heroism, and this, unknown to him, brought comfort to Eloise. For it strengthened her conviction that whatever motive had prompted her husband's unexplained last journey, that motive had been rooted deep in honor and love.

When the tea was ready he forced her to drink it and to eat a little food. And then, gradually, as her courage and self-possession returned, he led the conversation by imperceptible degrees to a discussion of her new life and the future.

"For the sake of your health and peace of mind," he counseled, "don't stay on here. This camp is too full of sad associations and memories. Go away somewhere and forget, if you can, all that has happened. Take up life again in some different place and among different people."

"But where?" she asked. "Where can I go? I can't live alone in a strange place among strange people."

He thought a moment, pacing back and forth.

"There is Hampton," he suggested. "Dr. Cavanaugh will be coming there in a few weeks. You liked him, and he was fond of you. And as soon as the drive is down I will come and see you, and between us perhaps we can arrange something for the future."

"No, Dick. No, I can't go there. I was happy there for a little while, but—"

She broke off abruptly, and Bream did not press her. He was conscious that in Hampton, as here, there were memories that she could not face.

"Of course," he said quickly. "I understand."

Then to her, perplexed, alone, overwhelmed by a great sense of bereavement, there came a desperate nostalgia for her

own—for flesh of her flesh and blood of her blood. With a pang of longing she thought of her tall, gaunt missionary father, with his white beard and piercing eyes, and of her gentle, cultured mother, out of whose barren, denied existence had flowered only roses where the ground was fertile for thorns. She thought of bent, old, wrinkled Akapukis, her Cree nurse, upon whose shoulders she had wept out her childish tragedies. And she yearned for them, all of them, with a longing that was a bitter, physical pain.

"Oh, Dick," she cried, the tears leaping to her eyes, "I want to go home! I want to see my mother. Oh, I want her, I need her. And my father."

"Yes, yes," he said, his heart throbbing to that lonely cry. "And you shall go. Why didn't I think of that! It settles everything. Just tell me how I can help you and I will. Where are they, your mother and father?"

"Oh!" she cried, suddenly conscious of the magnitude of her request, "miles away—hundreds of miles. It's folly to think of it."

"It can't be folly, Eloise, if it will bring you comfort. Where are they?"

She looked at him half in doubt for a moment, twisting her soaked handkerchief between her cold fingers.

"Have you forgotten?" she asked miserably. "They are at Moose Factory on James Bay—missionaries there. Can't you see how impossible it is?"

She sat forward, staring into space, her firm little chin in her hands and her elbows on her knees.

He took a turn the length of the room, his sharply bent brows the only sign of surprised memory he gave. Then he stopped before her and looked down into her pinched, white face.

"It is not impossible," he said gently. "We can start to-morrow. Luckily Quarles has got the dogs in shape again and we can use them. We have plenty of grub, and I can find out something about the country before we go, I'm sure."

"Dick!"

She sprang up, her face almost eager for a moment. Then the light died out of it, for she had begun to count the cost to him.

"Oh, what am I thinking of!" she cried. "We'll say no more about it, Dick. I just didn't think. It was only miserable selfishness. I'm sorry."

"Sorry! For what?" he asked, sensing the bitterness of her disappointment. "Look here, don't you suppose I understand your longing for them—your mother and father? I've had it—every man or woman has it at times, I suppose—that old yearning for the shelter and comfort of those who, after all, love us the most. I know, I know. And you have been away from them so long—and needed them so much sometimes! I'll be glad, *glad* to take you back to them!"

"Oh, you are good, Dick, so good"—she shook her head slowly—"but I couldn't allow that. Your work is here, and you are needed here. You have been away so long already. No, please don't think of it again."

"But, Eloise," he argued gently, "can't you understand that I could never be happy knowing that you needed this now and that I hadn't given it to you? There is no other place for you to go, is there?"

"No," she admitted.

"Well, then, if you refuse to go with me you will have to depend upon strangers when a *brigade* goes north, and I could never let you do that."

She rose from her chair and walked restlessly about the room.

"But I *can't* take you away now. It isn't right. I could never look back upon it and not regret my selfishness."

"Yes," he returned, "but this isn't a matter of selfishness; it is a matter of reason and common sense. Your life has suddenly been broken, and there is only one thing on earth that you need and that will bring you happiness." He faced her squarely, his grave, gentle eyes searching hers. "And do you think for a moment that this"—his sweeping arm indicated the camp—"could ever count with me against giving you that one thing and that happiness? It would be selfish on my part to withhold it."

Her eyes filled with tears, and something that was gratitude, yet warmer and deeper than gratitude, rose in her heart and shone resplendent through them. Had it not always been thus, that he responded instantly, unquestioningly to her greatest need?

"And that isn't all," he continued. "Leaving out your own desire, I think it is your duty to go north to your people. They haven't seen you in so long. They must need you."

She sighed and lowered her eyes.

"I can't argue with you to-day, Dick," she said wearily. "Your reasoning convinces me, and yet I feel I am wrong in letting you do this."

"You would be wrong in refusing me what is the greatest desire of my life—to make you happy," he replied simply.

With a little gesture of surrender she turned from him, and again walked aimlessly about the room, content to rest in his strength and decision.

"Then you will go?" he asked after a little.

"Yes."

There was a silence before he spoke again, this time gravely.

"You understand, Eloise, that we must go alone, that we will be alone together day and night, hundreds of miles, perhaps, from anywhere and anybody?"

She turned and met his questioning gaze with clear, untroubled eyes.

"Yes, I understand. But I shall not mind what people say."

"But they, up there, have you thought of them?" The question came after a moment of surprise. His warning had been aimed in another direction. Ah, how she trusted him!

"They will understand just as I do," she said. "They always have."

"I am glad, for there is no other way just now. To-morrow morning, then, after breakfast?"

"I will be ready."

He picked up his fur cap and mittens and put one hand on the door-latch.

"If I can help you in any way, feel free to call upon me," he said, and smiled.

The phrase, usual, conventional under the circumstances, rang like a clear bell in her brain, for it expressed for her the man himself. Had he not always given wholly, unstintingly, at her spoken or unspoken desire? The thought of the morrow, of the journey, of what inconvenience and patience it must entail upon him swept over her and, with that swift, free feeling that he alone had ever evoked, she turned impulsively toward him.

"Oh, Dick," she cried, "what would I do, what would I be, without you? When will you ever cease giving—giving to me?"

So swift was it, so genuine, this sudden outpouring of her appreciation, that he had not moved. Now searching her eyes, probing beyond them deep down into her soul, he saw for one dazzling instant what

sent the blood singing and spinning into his brain and caused him to reel back against the door. And before he could gain control his face blazed as by the light of an unseen fire and he straightened up.

Then a sudden realization that this thing he had seen had not been meant for his eyes, was but a concomitant of her disarmed gratitude, summoned all the grinding iron of his will. But the words on his lips were beyond recall.

"Never," he replied huskily. "Never while you need that giving."

Then, lifting the latch as by a mighty effort, he went unsteadily out, closing the door behind him.

But she, standing there as he had left her, scarcely knew he had gone, for she had seen his face in that one dizzy moment and felt close about her the presence of something rare, lovely, divine, that was a vital emanation from his soul.

He, stumbling to the office, found it empty, and sat down dazed upon his bunk to face the truth. The miracle had come to pass for which he had not even dared to hope. He knew it as surely and uncontestedly as he knew that he breathed. Too long had he dreamed of paradise not to know when the gates swung open.

And yet, did she realize that he knew? Was it not that her revelation had been unconscious, unprepared, a flash of weakness upon the heels of shock and tragedy? He believed it. The truth had been wrung from her, helpless, as the climax of a tempestuous and exhausting emotional day.

And yet, how well she had kept the secret before! How splendid had been her reserve, her control! How different, he thought, from his own miserable weakness and defeat.

Weakness and defeat! Ah, was he never to be strong? Now, not ten minutes ago, he had failed again, swept from his feet by the rush of his passion—*Now! NOW!* With Allan—his friend—the savior of his life—scarcely under ground! He shuddered, his head in his hands:

"God forgive me!" he prayed in his heart. "Let me not be a coward and a cur!"

Then his mind turned to the journey, and, for all his calling upon God, his heart-strings tightened. Could he do it—now, in the light of what he knew, of what he felt she must know? Could he plod two hundred miles across that frozen waste

alone with her and still be true in thought, word, and deed to those high things that had inspired him unfalteringly so far?

The very challenge in the thought quickened him. He sprang to his feet, his hands clenched, and paced the floor.

"There's another fight in me yet," he told himself, "another fight! Just a week. Just a week, that's all. I'll take her; I must take her. It's my duty. But—"

For an instant came a flash of the dazzling realization of her love. Then his jaw shut with a snap and he swore a great oath upon what he believed to be the wreckage of his manhood, that he would fight that one other fight already kindling in his vitals.

He did not pray as you and I were taught to pray, asking for things to be delivered, *f. o. b.* Heaven, at the earliest possible convenience: instead he dedicated himself to what he knew was right at every moment when he faced two choices. And because this habit had grown with cultivation, faith and hope surged in him now, and he felt himself stronger, better, worthier because of it.

He went to the door of the cabin and called for Quarles, to whom he gave orders regarding the preparation of the dogs and loading of the sledge, both of which he would inspect later himself. Then he devoted himself to a careful study of the big government map that hung against the front wall of the office.

That night, after supper, with something of the old ring of authority in his voice, he placed his fortunes in the hands of his lieutenants, explaining the necessity that took him away, and holding them responsible for the success of the drive up to the point where he could rejoin it on the Abimoming.

Now that fate had forced upon him again the duties that he had once felt were beyond his power ever more to assume, he was surprised at his own mood; at the strength he seemed to summon from unsuspected reservoirs in mind and body. Yet this, as it were, convalescence of the spirit was, though he did not know it, the moral legacy to him of Allan's sacrifice.

The desperate adventure in the Black River gorge and the physical effort of the journey back had cured him of his soul-sickness, had obliterated his brooding upon himself by forcing upon him thought and service for another.

The morning of the departure was clear but very cold and without wind. The dogs, in fairly good condition, were eager for the traces, and barked and scrambled as they were harnessed to the larger of the company sledges.

After breakfast, when he had inspected the load for the last time, Bream lashed it down securely with ropes and then broke out the runners which had been frozen in the snow over night by swinging the gee-pole sharply right and left. Then he went to the cabin for Eloise.

She answered his knock, dressed all in thick, brown fur, and already equipped with snow-shoes. He had not seen her since the afternoon before (Rolfe had taken what food she would eat to the cabin) and he searched her face anxiously. She was pale and weary-looking, as if she had not slept, and seemed, despite her furs, frail, as she never had before. Her gaze rested on his for an instant almost speakingly and he lowered his eyes.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied, and turned for a silent moment to look back into the cabin that was now dismantled of many of her cherished possessions.

Most of the men were at work in the forest, but she said good-by to those that remained, offering her hand with a low word of farewell. They, awkward, regretful, stood with their caps in their hands and mumbled replies.

When she had finished she approached the sledge.

"Will you ride?" asked Bream, gathering up his dog-whip.

"No, not at first, unless it will hinder you for me to walk."

"It will not hinder me," he said.

He cracked his whip and rushed on the dogs. They, yelping and eager, lunged against the breast-bands; the sledge groaned and squeaked as it left the ruts, and then, with Bream at the gee-pole, moved with increasing speed toward the northern end of the camp, the girl trudging beside it.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE OUT-TRAIL

THE route to Moose Factory that Bream had carefully worked out on the big government survey map in the office comprised

more than two hundred miles of travel. Its general course was due north, a little west, and he aimed to cover all the distance possible on lake and river ice.

It was a bold drive into virgin and primitive country. The first third of it would be a steady up-hill climb to the height of land which divides the waters flowing southward into the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence from those flowing northward into James and Hudson bays. There would be dense forests to traverse and streams and lakes innumerable until Lake Abitibi, which approximately marked the height, was reached. Thence they would journey along its southern shore to the outlet at the southwest end, and from that point follow the course of the river of the same name northward to its juncture with the Moose. Here their goal would be almost in sight.

Equipped physically with all the necessities for the long trail, and mentally with Quarles's and Albert's combined knowledge of the country to be met, Bream faced his task without fear.

Owing to the cold snap, the snow under foot was heavily crusted, so that neither sledge nor snow-shoe broke through it, and this, mercifully, made the first day's travel comparatively easy. So easy was it that in clearings or on straightaway runs the dogs had constantly to be restrained from outstripping their drivers. On down-hill work Bream had frequently to call upon Eloise for help, and then, while the sledge swooped and skidded, she would guide it in the rear by a tail-rope while he wrestled with the gee-pole in front.

From the first they said almost nothing, for the air at ten degrees below zero cut into their throats and lungs like a knife-blade. But this was not the only reason. Bream knew instinctively that speech would be a sacrilege now; that her mind and soul were traveling a far country of poignant memories and griefs.

Yet his thoughts never left her, nor his eyes, except to guide the dogs. He chose the footing that would be easiest for her and accommodated the pace to her feet. Her pale, pure face, half-hidden by her parka, seemed to him at times of an unearthly, etherealized beauty, and he watched anxiously for added traces of weariness or the blue pinch of cold. He yearned over her like a mother over some delicate, exquisite child.

The country they were traversing now was heavy virgin forest, that very forest, in fact, which the Y controlled. As the miles multiplied behind them they seemed to grow lonely, isolated, cut off from all human relationships. It was as if they were penetrating the unknown to the tinkle of Chinoki's bell, the creak of the sledge, and the rasp of their snow-shoes.

At ten o'clock Bream halted the dogs and waited for Eloise, who had lagged behind a little, to come up.

"It is time for you to ride now," he said with gentle authority. "You are not used to this, and we have days of it before us." He smoothed the moose-hide clothes-bag in the middle of the sledge.

She lifted her eyes to his with a look of almost childlike, patient dependence and went at once to the place he had prepared for her. Their gloved hands touched as he made her comfortable, and suddenly he felt the warm, close presence of her drawing something within him like a reel draws taut a cable. He did not meet her eyes again, but devoted himself silently to her needs.

At noon he called another halt for the midday meal. He chose a natural clearing and, after tangling the dogs' harness in a thicket to insure their quiet, set about the simple preparations.

Moved instinctively by the ethics of the trail that prescribe equality of labor, the girl sought to share the work. But he, recognizing the pit of exhausting reaction into which she had fallen after the fortitude of the past few days, bade her rest, and unobtrusively anticipated what she sought to do.

"Oh, Dick," she said tremulously, when he brought her bacon and beans and tea, "I'm nothing but a burden upon you. I can't even do my share after bringing you out on this journey. Take me back." Tears of weakness rose unbidden to her eyes.

"Take you back?" he repeated gently. "Please don't say that, or even think it, Eloise. How could I take you back? Don't you know I couldn't do that?"

"But I am so worthless—such a burden! It isn't right."

He spoke sharply to the dogs, which were moving restlessly and whining at the sight of food.

"Please!" he said a moment later. "Give me the pleasure of serving you. I

ask nothing more. And do eat something. You must."

She had put aside her granite plate, the food almost untouched, but now she picked it up again. "I'll try," she said, and conscientiously swallowed half of what he had given her.

The afternoon's travel did not differ from that of the morning, except in the increased upward grade toward the ridge of the highlands. The going was increasingly rough, and the dogs rarely exceeded a walk as they skirted thickets and strained up the frequent rises.

The girl rode much of the time, and Bream, realizing the effect of the hard travel upon her already great fatigue, made the night camp early.

They began supper in silence, and she attempted heroically to eat. Then, with a desperate effort to meet the exigencies of the situation, she tried to talk. What splendid timber there was above the Y; how cold it was for this time of the year; she had never passed through this country before, and it interested her; how soon would they reach Abitibi?

Bream conscientiously discussed every subject in turn, suffering sharply at the very sight of her pathetic effort. It recalled to him vividly the first night that he had known her, that night of the journey down to Hampton, and raised a remembrance of her unique manner on that occasion—the *savoir faire* of one who entertains an unexpected guest. The similarity and yet the contrast were painful.

Then, without warning, in the midst of their grave, halting phrases, her whole aspect changed with the suddenness of an April sky. Her hard-won factitious interest in their talk exploded like a bubble; her face lost its look of white control and became the mask of a bitter, agonizing regret. Her whole expression told of swiftly mounting pain—the forewarning of a mental eruption.

Bream, taken aback, watched her, frightened. Though he knew this was but one manifestation of her prostration, it unmanned him with its terrible intensity.

"Please—please!" he begged, his hands clenched in impotence. "What is it, Eloise? What is it?"

For a moment she seemed scarcely to have heard. Then, wringing her hands, she seemed to throw all her soul into the words that burst from her:

"Oh—what am I?" she cried. "Oh, if I only hadn't that memory! That memory of sending him away—that night! I broke his heart—and I never saw him again—never until he died!"

"Yes, yes," he soothed her as he groped in vain amid these facts for some handle of memory. Then a wretched pang of jealousy for which he immediately loathed himself shot through his heart. "But you must try not to think of those things," he added gently. "Remember only how brave he was and how good to us all."

"I do—oh, I do." Her dry-eyed anguish was pitiful to see. "And I tried to tell him—at the last. Do you think he understood me, Dick? Oh, I tried to make it plain. If he only understood!"

"He *did* understand. I know he did!" Bream's voice rang with strong, sincere conviction. "And it made him happy. His face was radiant and what you said brought that radiance to it. He was happy, happy when he died."

"Oh, but are you *sure*? Are you *sure*?" she broke out, eager to hear again and again his comforting reiterations. And he repeated his certitude and watched gratefully the light of pain slowly die from her face.

When she was herself again she said nothing either in apology for her outburst or in gratitude, but sat with bowed head and sad face staring into the fire.

And he glimpsed then, faintly, the depth and darkness of the valley she was passing through, of which he knew little and could only guess vaguely. And thereupon depression seized him that was equal parts self-hatred and hopelessness. His love was bitter ashes in his mouth and the illusion of all love and the whole riddle of existence settled upon him with a sickening weight.

At last she rose from her place and stood by the fire half turned toward the tent; instantly he was upon his feet. With a simple motion she drew off her fur gauntlet and held out her hand to him, and he, removing his own glove, took it. Then she stood for a full minute seeming to draw strength from the electric contact, while Bream ground his teeth at the throbbing of his pulses. At last she raised to him her face and glance, both profoundly sad, and, for a fleeting moment poured molten through his eyes the unspeakable gratitude that glowed in her. Then she

released her hand and walked to the tent he had set up.

"Good night," she said as she pulled back the flap.

"Good night," he answered and stood until it had dropped behind her.

He lighted his pipe, washed the few dishes, and arranged things conveniently for quick handling the next morning. Then, piling wood on the fire, he sat down on his sleeping-ropes beside it. Ah, how broken, how crushed she was, he thought. And how hard her misery was for him! Harder than he had ever dreamed possible. He must keep a double watch on his emotions, he told himself, cultivate a force of will that would let him die rather than betray his feelings. Only to-day he had a dozen times felt the impulse to say or do something that, said or done, would have jeopardized his honor and self-respect.

A faint sound caught his ear and instantly he was alert, every faculty aquiver. A moment later it was repeated and he realized that it came from the tent, that it was the sound of Eloise weeping!

He was profoundly moved. Every smothered sob became a knife-thrust in his heart, a torture which he could neither turn aside nor relieve.

What was it that made her weep, he wondered?

Was it the past, so freshly sorrowful and yet so irrevocable? Was it Allan whose memory still haunted her with pangs of regret for he knew not what?

Strong, masculine, inured to a life and a people that crushed down grief and accepted injury stoically and death fatalistically, he could not know the host of poignant memories that forever crowded through her mind. He could not know that, despite the vicissitudes through which she had passed, her feelings were still as sensitive and impressionable as when she had been a girl, and that she wept in turn over Allan's first brilliant, debonair charm, his spiritual longing, the change in his life, and the words with which she had sent him to his death that he might give her love.

With clenched fists and gritted teeth Bream fought down an overmastering impulse to go to her, to take her in his starving arms and comfort her. He loved her; she loved him. Was that not enough?

Instinctively he knew that in the shelter

of his arms she would find peace and rest, and his impotence to give them to her maddened him. He cursed it, he cursed the necessity for it, and that wretched jealousy that he hated so surged in his breast again. Torn with recurrent disgust and pain, he could not sit still. He sprang to his feet and began pacing up and down before the fire.

Toward midnight the sounds from the tent had ceased. Only then did he crawl into his sleeping-ropes, feet to the fire, and try to rest. He lay on his back, drawing long, deep breaths, and as he gazed up at the stars that glittered with frosty fire through the clear air a sense of the preciousness of that life which was in his keeping surged over him. Unconsciously he prayed, and presently, while he hovered in soul about that little brown tent, his eyes closed and he drifted into sleep.

The next morning was gray again and deceived the sleepers so that it was after sunup before Bream awoke. He rolled out of his blankets at once and set about the preparation of breakfast, moving about noiselessly in his moccasins lest he should disturb the girl. For he felt she was sleeping soundly for perhaps the first time since she had lain down.

When nothing remained to be done he awoke her. She greeted him with gracious dignity and deliberate cheerfulness, although her heavy, encircled eyes bespoke plainly the accumulated sleeplessness that preyed upon her. He noticed hopefully this resolute attempt to master her feelings for his sake, and accepted it as it was offered, without comment. He felt, too, that she was physically stronger, and that she had gained in nerve force and control.

But offsetting all this was the fact that, however gallant her attempted naturalness, her face never lost its look of fixed brooding, of subjective concentration. And, realizing this, an unaccountable qualm of fear for he knew not what arose in Bream and would not be allayed.

Despite determined efforts she could not eat, and Dick, conscious that she had tried, did not urge her. But he laid this fact resentfully against that intense inner activity which he could see in constant ebullition, but of which he knew nothing. What was it, he wondered uneasily, that could thus sap the forces of her body and spirit? Some titanic battle of the soul, he hazarded, cursing it because it tortured her.

But what battle? He did not know, could not guess any more than he had been able to divine the hidden causes of her tears the night before. His helpless impotence maddened him; the continual uncertainty tautened his nerves. Fearing lest he should speak, he plunged feverishly into the various activities of getting away.

Early during that morning's march they made out in the near distance, from a rocky rise, the transverse, island-studded, white expanse of Lake Abitibi.

When they gained its southern shore they found the ice excellent for travel and began to make fast time. This sort of going exactly suited the dogs, and for miles they flew at a tireless lope, enabling Bream to tow behind at the end of a line while Eloise rode.

It was exhilarating sport, and it stirred Bream's blood. He felt again the intoxication of youth and the goodness of being alive. A reactive mood of exuberant unrestraint seized him, and he shouted to the echoing trees and rocks as he ran or dragged behind. He bellowed snatches of song, he performed antics, he addressed the grinning dogs in grotesque abuse. Altogether, in an effort to divert Eloise, he acted like a schoolboy let loose. And she responded. Once her silvery laugh broke forth at some piece of horse-play, and he was rewarded.

But even as she watched him she half veiled her eyes, lest he should see her adoration for his captivating boyishness. She succumbed to the infection of his extravagant gaiety, and for a while was lifted out of herself, seeming to forget the dark groping of her mind.

But he saw with dismay that, in the end, this only increased the fall back into the abyss, and he witnessed with his own eyes the sudden resumption of the grim struggle.

In truth, her soul was on its Golgotha.

She loved Bream utterly, madly. She longed with every fiber of her being to call him, to yield, to lose herself in the great ocean of his love. And yet she could not, would not, for ever a ceaseless voice within her cried: "Wait! Can you claim this love without dishonor, without regret, without self-reproach? Think, first, how it has come to you!"

How had it come to her? As the final result of her impassioned confession to Allan! Though she could not know all

that had shaped itself in her husband's mind, yet she realized that it was this that had sent him on his fatal journey after Bream, and that had inspired in him the dogged courage of the Black River gorge.

This love had been laid at her feet by the sacrifice and death of her own husband. Could she, then, take it? Was there not in that very circumstance the demand for refusal? Was she desiring sacrilege, inviting the punishment of the *Queen* in "Hamlet"?

What of the future, should she claim the dream of her life? Would she be untrammelled by doubt, untroubled by a cavil of conscience after the first bliss of possession?

The conflict tore her with an agony that was greater than physical pain, for, unswervingly through it all, she clung to those rarefied ideals that formed the foundation upon which any structure of happiness for her must rest. Rather than a barren but peaceful cloister should rise upon them than a gorgeous palace upon the quicksand of desire.

Tugging with inconceivable power against this consciousness, she felt Bream's love; the more so because, being ignorant of what had occurred after he left the camp, he could not divine the forces that assailed her. Unconsciously, mutely, he pleaded, as one who believed that the past had been peacefully and honorably laid away.

These things she fought over and over again as the morning dragged by. But he who did not know, who was eating his heart out at the sight of her passion-torn face, could not understand—reached a point at last where he could endure no more.

They had finished the noon meal and were talking disconnectedly, at random, both conscious of the effort and of the barrier that was rising between them more plainly with every hour. Suddenly rebellion seized Bream, a mad resistance against this intangible thing, and his despair found voice.

"Eloise," he burst out, white to the lips, "what is this thing that is troubling you so? I have watched it breaking your heart all yesterday and all to-day and I can't stand it any longer. Tell me what it is!"

Taken aback by his vehemence, she did not answer at once, but sat with lowered

eyes, seeking for words. Only her gloved hands expressed emotion as they sought the edge of the sledge on which she sat and gripped it convulsively.

"I cannot tell you, Dick," she said at last in a voice of pain. "Please, *please* don't ask me."

"Can't tell me!" he cried, striving for restraint. "Why can't you tell me? You *must* tell me! You sit for hours with the look of death on your face, and I can't stand it, I tell you! I can't stand it another minute." He leaped to his feet and stood before her, his face working with emotion.

"I know," she said in a small, weary voice. "I know that I am selfish and a burden to you, Dick. And you are so good and patient with me! But this—oh, believe me when I say that I cannot tell you. You wouldn't understand, you couldn't."

"Understand! Is there anything about you that I don't understand? Has there ever been? *Can there ever be?*" His voice was trembling, vibrant.

Stirred to the depths by his passion, she rose and faced him, meeting his pleading eyes with noble gentleness.

"Oh, don't you know that I *want* to tell you!" she said, her tone ringing deep and sweet.

"I want to tell you everything. But I can't tell you this. It is something that I couldn't tell even to my mother. It concerns a question that I must decide for myself, and not even you, were you a thousand times you, could help me."

Afraid to trust himself for the moment, he turned abruptly and walked back and forth until he could again command his voice. Baffled, denied, he was frantic with impotence and jealousy. Did the tragedy of Allan's death still claim her, he wondered? Was his own love, his vital, living love, nothing to her?

"Eloise," he cried poignantly, "forgive me—but the past is dead, and all the thought or regret in the world can't make it live again. Tell me, share this thing with me, whatever it is. God knows I would sooner bear it all than see you suffering as you do."

"Oh, if it were only the past!" she cried out. "That I could tell you, but this—this is of the present and future, and only I can decide, only I. Oh, Dick"—her eyes filled with tears of weariness and self-

pity—"be patient with me just a little longer. Be good to me, for I am in the dark, and I don't know where to go. Here I have only you, and all my life is in your hands. Think of those things, Dick, and give me a little more time. I will tell you when I can."

"When you can! But now, *now* is the time—when you need help so much! Oh, trust me, Eloise! Pour out your heart to me. I am starving for it! It—it may save us both!"

"Dear Dick!" Her voice choked. "Always the same—offering yourself in my dark hours. Oh, if it were in human possibility I *would* tell you—you deserve it—but, God help me, I can't. I *can't*, Dick. Don't ask me again!"

Her tears, her great longing for him that sounded so clear and yet without words, sent the misery of his thwarted love mounting to his head like fumes of wine. A frenzy of rebellion swept over him. He would end it all—the time was past for reason now—their suffering was too great—by it they had expiated already a dozen lifetimes of scruple and remorse! The merging of their loves into one great stream would float any wretchedness that either might know!

He took a step forward, his drawn face a white flame.

Then his vow, the thought of his unstained manhood smote him and he stopped abruptly. Her eyes, grave, large, unafraid, were on him, but he did not see them.

Suddenly, with a moan of anguish, he turned from her and fled to where the dogs lay beside a thicket watching with pointed ears erect and rolling eyes. "Action! Action!" his reason cried with her last gasp. Without a word he untangled the animals and drove them out to be hooked to the sledge.

He moved like a wire-controlled automaton, blind, deaf, oblivious to everything but the desperate need of escaping his temptation. His breath came in whistling gasps between his teeth, and in his mind a jumble of meaningless phrases clashed and whirled: "Go, now! Go! go! I'm done, I'm broken. I'll never get through it again! Another time like this and I'll—" Then, aloud to her wildly over his shoulder as he fastened the traces: "Ready, there? Are you ready? Up quick, then! We're going!"

And, last of all, to the dogs as the long, black whip cracked:

"Hi, there! Mush on, you! Mush on!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE ANSWER

THAT night they camped at the outlet of the lake which is the head of Abitibi River. They had traveled the whole afternoon practically in silence, both sensible of an atmosphere that crackled with danger at the first word from either. But though they spoke little, their minds were busy. She thought: "My beloved! He has done his best, but he has reached the end. Oh, if he should camp me permanently to-night and go back and send some of the other men to finish the journey with me! Yet—perhaps he ought for both our sakes."

The hateful question that recurred time and again to him was: "How can I love her as I do and yet fail so to serve her honorably?" And his only answer was a grim resolution of battle, a clarion call for his moral conscripts to take the field in one last stand. He felt his Gettysburg approaching.

Sitting sleepless, pipe in hand, by the camp-fire after she had gone to bed, he mulled things over. It was quiet to-night. No sound of smothered weeping tortured him. Instead, he sometimes imagined he could hear the soft sound of her peaceful, regular breathing. At such times he was happy and thankful and would look at the little brown tent with tender, worshiping eyes.

Dear as the thought of kisses was that tent to him now. It had become the symbolic curtain to an exquisite arcanum, the veil to a holy of holies, every thought of which brought him figuratively to his knees. In it was all good, all beauty, all perfection. Outside and beyond it there was nothing.

Reviewing more calmly now the narrowly averted crisis at noon, he could not discern wherein it had brought about any change in Eloise. Certainly, to judge by her unchanged attitude, it had not exorcised the dark spirits that preyed upon her with the malignancy of a disease.

He sighed wearily, almost hopelessly. How long would it last, this disease? And what was it? Of what stuff? Sprung from what cause?

The baffling, intangible nature of the thing was a challenge even while it was infuriating. What could there be in her life that he might not know? What question concerning which his counsel would be valueless?

He loosened his fur tunic, for the weather had suddenly turned warmer, and sucked abstractedly at his squeaking pipe as he pondered. Then a fact to which his emotions had blinded him all day became clear: namely, that a change had taken place in the substance of her thoughts since the start of the journey. Last night it had been the past: Allan and the fact that she had sent him away broken-hearted. To-day at noon it had not been the past, but the present and future, as her own words proved.

Considering these things, it seemed as if her reasoning had progressed from one logical step to another of the same problem. He tried to follow that reasoning in the light of what he knew of past events.

She had sent Allan away and broken his heart; immediately afterward Allan had trailed him into the Oseko country; Allan had begged him there with every argument he could muster to return to the camp.

Why?

Bream reviewed his partner's character and their relations.

A great change had come over Allan during the winter; he had been reborn morally and spiritually; both before that change and after it his one saving quality had been his great and sincere love for Eloise; he had been told frankly of Bream's consuming passion for his wife.

Was there any connection between all these facts?

Bream mused with an involuntary quickening of the pulses. Something told him that he would soon strike a trail.

Presently his thought returned carefully to her words of the night before. She had sent Allan away broken-hearted. He picked up the scent here. Only one thing he knew could have broken Allan's heart—the rejection of his love—the knowledge that his transformation had been in vain as a revivifier of her dead heart. Even so, why should Allan have immediately set out after him?

A swift, daring surmise that became almost at once a thrilling certainty shot through Bream. Like clicking lock tum-

blers that fall into place, the steps of his reasoning arranged themselves into the correct combination, and the iron door that had baffled him so long swung open.

Eloise had broken Allan's heart indeed, for undoubtedly, Bream reasoned, she had told him of the new love that had come into her life. And Allan, knowing then that they two loved each other, had, in supreme proof of his regeneration, sought to bring him back that they might have their happiness.

Bream sat very still, his head bowed in reverence, as the wonder and splendor of this man's sacrifice dawned upon him; and when he measured the distance toward mastery the other had progressed in comparison with his own accomplishment, he felt very humble and unworthy.

Then, presently, he apprehended the struggle that was torturing Eloise, and a feeling of blank helplessness came over him. In truth, she could not have told him of it, nor could he have said one word to hasten or make easy her decision. With her alone, with her inmost feelings it rested, and he felt, in sudden poignant realization, that upon it hung life and death and the very existence of the universe for him.

He was aware that to many souls it might have come easily, this decision, borne upon the swift feet of a lifelong desire. But with her he sensed that there would be a difference; that it would inevitably come as the decretal of those highest beliefs which were so instinctive and exquisite a part of her, and which had from the first ensnared his imagination and fired his love. Then, suddenly, with a sharp qualm, he feared these beliefs, for he knew that she was capable of crucifying both herself and him at their monition.

What the final word would be he did not know, she did not know, but the undeniable conviction was borne in upon him that it would be irrevocable, unshakable.

And terror crept into his heart to lie with the helplessness already there, such terror as he had never known. For his instinct told him that, despite their situation, his power and her dependence, should she make the great refusal, he would be as powerless to change it as to call back the hours that were flowing into the darkness of eternity.

No man awaiting the gallows ever sat through a more bitter night of anguish

than did Bream beside the dying fire. It was not until three in the morning that he could calm himself sufficiently to roll into his blankets, and it was an hour later before his eyes closed in a phantasma-haunted sleep.

When he arose at dawn, pale and exhausted, the warmth in the air that he had noted the night before was oppressive. In fact, the weather had changed suddenly and completely overnight, and there was a "feel" abroad that seemed to portend some drastic natural event. The sky was covered by a rayless plaster of clouds the color of modeler's clay; there was no wind, and the trees on the river-bank stood motionless in an ominous hush.

These phenomena drew Bream's mind sharply from the thoughts that haunted him and centered it on the details of the day's journey. He called Eloise's attention to conditions and found that she was not insensible to their influence.

"I feel in my bones that something is going to happen," she told him.

"And so do the dogs, from the way they act," he replied, having for some time watched the restive uneasiness of the animals. "I don't believe we had better try the river to-day," he added presently. "The current beneath is swift, and I am not going to take any chances with the ice. Woods work is slower, but it's safer."

"I think it is best," she agreed.

While they were packing up they said little. His manner to her was subdued, anxious, for her unchanged demeanor told him that she had arrived at no decision overnight. He dreaded that day as he had dreaded nothing in his whole life.

Their prescience regarding the ominous preparation of the invisible forces of nature was further borne out by the dogs when the start was made. Instead of leaping with their usual eagerness to the work, they whined and hung back, sniffing the air suspiciously. But once they were forced to start they went with almost an excess of energy, as if they sought to meet what they could not avoid.

For two hours they traveled without incident. Then, about ten o'clock, Bream became conscious of a sudden darkening of the already gloomy sky and, looking up, saw the northwest smuttled over with a mass of dirty, low-hanging clouds that advanced rapidly.

"There it comes—snow!" he cried to Eloise as a single breath-taking puff of wind almost halted him in his tracks. "Climb on the sledge. We'll have to run for it."

No sooner had she taken her seat than the whip whistled among the dogs and they were off on the run, apparently sensible by instinct of the need for haste.

The sledge was now traveling across an area of frozen, swampy ground in which occasional jack-pines furnished the only possible protection from the storm. A quarter of a mile away was a timber line, and it was the shelter beyond this that Bream sought.

With almost inconceivable rapidity the smudge of snow-clouds mounted the sky, driving before it tattered shreds of wind-cloud that writhed and churned ceaselessly. Even as the racing dogs reached the edge of the woods the zenith was a seething mass of these, and the violent storm gusts were clutching at Bream's garments with lustful fingers.

Once inside the forest the fury of the wind was broken, but Bream did not stop. A little farther on he saw a knoll topped by an intertwined growth of spruce and hazel thickets, and toward this he urged the dogs, shouting hoarsely against the mounting diapason of the wind.

As he drew up in the lee of the knoll the first uninterrupted blast of the storm itself smote them, combining in its blow the force of a mighty mass and the keenness of a knife-blade. But the snow was not yet.

"Lively!" yelled Bream. "Unroll the tent while I unharness the dogs."

But Eloise needed no prompting. She was running beside the sledge, tugging at the lashings before it had halted.

It was but the work of a minute to release the dogs, and this done, Bream turned to help her. The animals, once they were free, immediately set about digging their nests, but only for a moment. As Chinoki, the leader, sought a sheltered spot he all but bowled over a big snowshoe rabbit which, true to its nature, had been imitating a snow-covered stump at the approach of danger. With a snort of mingled fright and eagerness the leader leaped out after it as it bounded away, and in an instant the remaining dogs were in full cry, their chronic state of semi-starvation outweighing their fear of the storm.

Bream and the girl, in their desperate haste, were oblivious to the incident, their only concern being their preparation to meet the first furious break of the storm. Together they raised the tent that seemed now such pitiful shelter, securing it with the usual ropes and pegs.

Then, as Bream stood up for a moment, he saw the deadly coming of the snow. It rode on the wings of the wind itself, a blank wall of whirling white that blotted from view as it passed, trees, bushes, earth, and sky. In an instant it was upon them, and so dense were the flakes that, though almost within hand's reach of the tent, he could barely distinguish its outline.

Recovering his bearings, he leaped to the remaining work. One after another he lifted the heavy articles from the sledge and fought his way with them to the tent that now rocked and bellied in the gale. Here, at various points along the flapping edge, he dropped them as ballast, trusting to the snow to do the rest.

Seeing Eloise safely inside, he commanded her to remain there and continued his labors, panting and sweating against the fury of the strangling wind. The dense mass of snowflakes beat upon his face and, melting, left it wet, red, and shiny. Water ran down his neck and seemed to seep through every vulnerable crevice of his fur armor. His final effort was to ballast the rear of the tent with the sledge itself, which he dragged into position by main strength.

When, after resting a moment, he was hustling to the front again, the fragile shelter and Eloise were all that remained of his world, for the familiar, friendly forest had been obliterated as if by the smearing stroke of some great mitten.

The problem of his own comfort did not trouble him. Wrapped in his sleeping-robes, and lying beneath a deepening blanket of snow, he could find as much snug warmth as any curled-up husky.

He had previously piled his sleeping-bag and blankets at the door of the tent, and had stooped down to gather them up when he heard her voice, faint above the noise of the wind.

"Dick! Dick! Where are you?" Then, as his form appeared kneeling before the open flap: "Oh—I thought you were lost! You frightened me for a moment."

"Sorry," he shouted back. "I'm all right. You comfortable?"

She drew nearer the opening.

"Yes, thanks. The tent will hold now, I think. We didn't any more than just make it, did we?"

"That's all."

He was fumbling with his sleeping things and now attempted to shake them out with a view to quick and convenient use. She watched him silently for a moment, a surmise taking shape in her mind.

"What are you going to do with those?" she challenged.

"Going to roll up in them out here. I'll be all right, and I'll keep an eye on you."

"What?" she cried. "Stay out in this storm? Look here, you mustn't do that, Dick. It's worse than you think out there."

"It's nothing," he returned. "The snow will be as warm for me as for the dogs." He lifted the blankets and furs and let them flap and rattle in the wind.

She looked at him for an instant and imagined she understood. Naturally, she thought, he could hardly demand her hospitality!

"But listen," she protested. "Really, your staying out is unnecessary. This wind is terrible. It will numb you before you know it. I—"

She stopped abruptly, and then with an impulsive movement flung wider the open flap of the tent.

"Come in here," she offered frankly. "You mustn't stay outside. There's plenty of room for us both."

Watching, she saw him become still, as if seized by a sudden thought. Then he turned his head away and she heard indistinctly, his voice grown suddenly gruff:

"No. I'll be all right along this bank somewhere. This storm won't last forever. I'll be all right."

"Dick!" she cried. "Listen to reason! Be sensible and get under cover."

He was rerolling the bed-robcs now and did not look at her.

"No," he repeated doggedly in his gruff tone, and then, with more emphasis: "No!"

Suddenly her consciousness seemed to ring a note of warning in her brain, as if there was something she had not sensed behind his stubborn refusal. But just as she was aware of this feeling the storm swept her mind to a totally different emotion.

From somewhere deep in the forest

there came the roar of wind that gathered strength and voice and destructive power in a mighty crescendo as it raged toward them. The next instant it swooped down and tore and wrenched at the straining tent until Eloise expected to see the frail shelter collapse upon her.

Then the fear of destruction, of the brutal fury of unleashed forces, gripped her suddenly, as it does all puny humans at times, and with an exclamation of fear she clutched his arm, clinging to him.

"Dick!" she cried, "don't go away! Oh, don't go! Don't leave me alone in this storm. Stay with me. I'm so afraid."

For an instant he sat motionless as the wind lessened, and she could feel him quivering beneath her touch. Then he turned to her, his face livid, his eyes burning like those of some tortured saint.

"And I am afraid!" he said, his voice strangely thin and high and unnatural. "Afraid to stay! And I won't stay. Do you understand? I won't stay!"

For a moment he seemed to be strangling, for he tore at the throat of his parka. Then he got to his feet weakly, one hand stretched gropingly before him, and walked like a man in a dream into the fury of wind and snow, his blankets trailing forgotten behind him. Almost instantly he had disappeared in the white smother.

Then, in a flash of divination, she understood this half-madness—realized the temptation her pleading had been to him—and she shrank back wide-eyed at the naked revelation. A swift agony of contrition swept her that his suffering should have come through her, and crying his name wildly, she started up as if to rush after him. But her voice was torn to shreds at the tent door, and ere she could crawl outside she realized the rashness of her impulse when his every footprint was obliterated as soon as he made it. Conscious of her helplessness, she sank down, the prey of a strange, new guilt.

Where was this going to end? His had been the face of one desperate. To what was she unconsciously driving him? Her impotence to relieve the situation or allay his suffering maddened her. With bleeding heart she saw him breaking, and yet she could not cry: "Come, my beloved, let us take our love."

She could not, she *could* not, because, stronger than that impulse was her desire for his ultimate happiness, something

quite impossible to realize should a shadow of self-reproach hang over their union.

A gust of wind drove the stinging, icy snowflakes into her face, and almost without volition she moved back inside the tent and wrapped herself in her stiffening robes.

"I want him, I want his love, but, oh, I cannot take it!" her cry rose up. "I've had no answer, no answer!"

The cruel injustice of her position became a poignant misery, and with her hands pressed hard against her face she sobbed piteously. The very thought of Allan lashed her like a whip, for it thrust before her again the crux of her undecided three-day struggle. And, suddenly, everything in her future seemed interdependent, deadlocked, closed round her in an invisible mesh from which there was no escape.

"O God, *give* me an answer!" she implored abandonedly. "I must know *now*. This can't go on any longer. I have tried all my life, and he has tried—oh, we have both been true so long! Is there nothing for us? Is there no way out in honor and peace? Is it a lie that right finds its reward and wrong its punishment? Are these things all lies to which I have given my life and he has given his? If they are, O God, let me know it now and end this wretched striving after dreams and unrealities!"

Black chaos of the mind and spirit descended upon her and faith tottered on its pedestal. Contemplation, patient search for the lighted way, had availed her nothing, and now she threw them aside. Her soul became one great insistent voice clamoring to the supreme intelligence of which she was so feeble a part, for the justification of its being.

The storm lulled, its first fury spent. Near-by trees, garbed in delicate lace and enveloped in whirling snow-veils, appeared like brides ready to tread the runners of spotless new carpet that had been laid along the cathedral aisles of the forest. No longer were the flakes whipped and driven; they came eddying and dancing like a flight of attendant butterflies.

And everywhere was stillness—the brooding, thinking stillness of wild places.

Long the girl sat, her body relaxed, her mind numbed, inactive. Yet all the while her spirit plunged deep and deeper into the soul-silence within her—that silence

which was one with the stillness of nature itself.

And suddenly she felt calmed and strengthened and a great peace fell upon her. Her broken spirit was bathed in infinite gentleness. She was borne for a moment in the arms of divine compassion.

Then out of the unfathomable deeps with which she had unconsciously linked herself, convincing and unmistakable, came the answer which she had sought so long. It came in words as startlingly clear as if a human voice had spoken them, and yet she knew that they were not hers, that some agency outside herself inspired them.

"You are not responsible for Allan's death!" it seemed to say. "His life was his own, to take up or to lay down. He was working out his own salvation, and you were but an instrument in that working out—one of many. His sacrifice was needed that the balance might be made good—that his soul might be clean and free. He has passed to a wider view, a deeper knowledge. Let Allan go. Stand up. Slough off the past like an old garment. Live your life. Bring it to fulfillment—for peace is your right and love your inheritance."

The words ceased to come. Again the silence within and without.

Eloise slowly lifted her head, and there was that in her face which seemed to light the little tent with an unearthly radiance—the incandescence of sublime, unshakable faith.

"*I know!*" she murmured, her lips parted in a glad smile, her eyes fixed upon some glowing inner vision. "*I know at last!*"

Doubt was gone now, and with it questioning and seeking. Her part was clear to her, her path defined. She experienced a feeling of lightness and resiliency that presently became an unreasoning eagerness. Then, suddenly, there surged up in her a joy so overmastering that she flung wide her arms and drew a deep, ecstatic breath.

She was free! She loved, oh, how she loved! And she was beloved by the prince of men! No need now to dread the words that seemed always on his lips; no need now to twist and turn and evade and forbid. But oh, let him not keep her waiting too long!

She pulled aside the tent-flap and rose to her knees.

The storm was almost over now, and already one could see long distances through the thinning snow. It was a black and white, smothered world, but, as she looked out upon it, still caught in the first, sweet joy of her realization, it seemed the most beautiful world she had ever seen. She wanted to call aloud to it her joy, to clasp it to her heart.

She crawled outside the tent and stood up. The little shelter was snow-ballasted now and steady as a rock. Behind it rose sharply the outline of the knoll, with its half-buried thickets and laden trees. Before was the little stretch of timber that led to the swampy section across which they had raced for cover; in the other direction the forest.

Immediately at hand were familiar objects—round, snowy lumps holding down the tent edge and, behind, one runner of the sledge projecting into the air. Four of the dogs moved sniffing about near by. The other two were, she supposed, still asleep in their holes under the snow.

She wondered a little why she did not see Dick. He had said he could be comfortable somewhere along the bank, and she had rather hoped to see his huddled shape when she looked about her. The question as to why he had not returned to the tent when the storm began to abate suggested itself, but she dismissed it with the thought that perhaps he had fallen asleep or was delaying for some other reason. Nevertheless, she scrutinized carefully the whole windward side of the knoll for some mound that might conceal him.

Then reason told her that though it had stormed furiously, yet the snow could hardly have covered him completely in this sheltered spot. She looked at her watch. Half past eleven, an hour and a half since they first had noticed the approach of the storm. She shook her head, yet walked along the foot of the knoll to reassure herself.

"Dick, oh, Dick!" she called. "Halloo! Halloo!"

Perhaps he had sought shelter in some still more protected spot, but reason immediately asked how he could have found such a spot in the storm that was raging when he left her. A faint shock of uneasiness registered and passed.

She made a trumpet of her hands and sent her long, sustained "Halloo!" in

every direction, listening intently after its echoes had died away. For answer a whisky-jack scolded from the tip of a spruce and a pert squirrel jeered. The forest folk were commencing to reappear and resume their interrupted occupations.

When fifteen minutes had passed without human answer to her calls, she confessed herself at a loss to understand, and her uneasiness returned. The vernal joy of her heart was chilled and subdued like a too early flower.

Presently, after several indecisive beginnings, she strapped on her snow-shoes to try to look for him. She did not dare go far, for she knew that as soon as her back was turned the half-starved huskies would be at the provision bags. Keeping the camp in sight, she walked first in one direction, then in another, hallooing continuously.

Where could he be? It was not like him to go away and stay like this, especially when they had already lost two hours out of their day.

She recalled the circumstances of his going, his ghastly face, his unnatural voice, the terrible strain under which he had been laboring. Then she felt stirring in her a vague connection with the past, and suddenly she stopped as if stricken.

Her mind had leaped back to that night when he had so suddenly left the Bream & Mackenzie camp. She knew now from the message in his eyes what had driven him forth then, and a fear so sickening that it drowned all her previous fears swept over her. Had that happened again? Had he, strained beyond endurance, beyond reason, cast everything to the winds and rushed away?

She pressed her hands spasmodically against her heart to control its wild beating and her breath came slowly, laboredly. Could it be, she cried, this unthinkable thing—now—now when the long struggle was over, when all of life awaited him here for the taking?

Her thought reverted dully to the crisis through which she had just passed, from which she had emerged, dowered with heaven. Was this to be the end—the gift of their love snatched away at the moment of its giving?

It was the supreme crisis. Then, standing there alone, one tiny human spark in the midst of endless, snowy desolation, she garnered the full fruit of that cry she had

launched so despairingly into the void. The faith that had wavered stood firm, belief took the place of question.

"The path for us has been made clear," she cried with glad certainty, "and upon it he will come to me. Wherever he is, he will know and he will come. Our desire *must* bring its own fulfilment. We have kept the law and we have waited so long. I know, I *know* that this cannot be taken from us."

Strong, revitalized, lifted out of herself by her unshakable knowledge, she stood as upon a mountain peak, her face to the glad morning that she knew must dawn.

And even as she looked she saw him come around the knoll, Chinoki trotting before him with tinkling bell. He was carrying something in his arms which she recognized a moment later as another of the huskies. His face was bent above the animal, and she saw that he was talking to it gently.

Radiant, eager, she moved toward him, drinking in the vision, her eyes like stars, her lips parted.

"Dick!" she cried, her soul in her voice. "Dick!"

"Ah," he said with quick concern, "I hope you weren't anxious because I was gone so long. The dogs must have been hunting or something, for this chap got his foot in an otter trap. Chinoki dug me out of the snow and led me—why, Eloise—what—what—"

He stopped short, for he had seen the light of glory on her face. She heard the swift intake of his breath, and then he laid the whining husky gently on the snow.

"I might have guessed," she breathed. "When have you not sought out the hurt and the miserable and brought them home? Oh, my splendid lover!"

"Eloise!"

His voice was a great cry that held in its one note the surcease from an eternity of pain. For a moment he stood as one who, waking, suspects a dream. Then, reading the message in her starry eyes, the effulgence that beat upon her face commenced to shine upon his and he slowly opened his arms.

"My dear, oh, my dearest," she sobbed, and ran to him. "Take me, Dick! Oh, hold me close. I need you—oh, I need you!"

With an incoherent cry he swept her to him, and as their lips met their souls, so

long alone, rushed together into celestial, perfect union.

CHAPTER XXIX

AND THEY ALL LIVED—

THAT storm broke the back of winter, and the next morning, when they reluctantly left the enchanted spot that had once upon a time been their camp, the air was warm and laden with exhilarating odors that had crept up from the south overnight.

"Spring is here at last, beloved," said Eloise, lifting her face to the touch of the soft south breeze as they sat at breakfast. "Winter will go quickly now."

"It is gone already from my heart," he returned. "Even the memory of it is very dim. There can be nothing but summer now forever and ever."

She laughed, a little, low laugh of happiness, and rested fond eyes upon him—loving the proud carriage of his head, with its gently curling hair, his eager face, and sparkling eyes. He was so boyish, so unspoiled, so glorified.

"Yes—summer forever and ever," she said, and waited ecstatic for the flame of his kiss.

He was like one who from a crest sees his promised land and finds it lovelier than his wildest dreams. She came, magically, to have in his eyes the attributes of those two women in whose double likeness she seemed molded—*Beatrice* and *Héloise*—the infinitely worshiped and the infinitely desired.

Every movement of her was exquisite poetry, every word divine music. The touch of their fingers about the tin cup when she passed his tea brought at once a benediction and a thrill. Overpowered by exaltation, he marveled at her serene beauty, her courage, her unfailing sweetness. The sight of a wilful tendril of her hair curling out of her *parka* was enough to snare his heart in a silken net and hold it for hours a stupefied, adoring prisoner.

Somehow they broke the spell and resumed their journey, radiant lovers of the untracked road, gipsies of the wild. And though the snow grew soft and held them back, there was no hardship on that journey, for it led across Acadia; neither was there weariness nor anything that seemed of earth.

Halcyon days those were — wondrous days, all enchantment, ravishment, transport, when every task was veiled in a golden mist and every ache or pain vanished at the touch of life.

The land started to awaken before their very eyes, as if in honor of their passing; laurel and hazel, willow and cottonwood buds swelled, purple and green and brown; the moss upon the trees and where the snow was scraped away commenced to show fresh and vivid; grasses and great ferns and thousands of wild flowers stirred in their sleep, feeling the new pulse of mounting life.

Upon the sap-swollen trees all the feathered life that had appeared as if by magic at the first true budding of spring trilled and sang its mating song to those who, too, would mate at last in a nest of their own.

The sun was kind, but not too fervent, the winds were soft, with an edge of iciness that held the snow, there was everywhere a consciousness of indestructible life leaping up after its long sleep, like a young man to run a race. And these two who had sought so long looked upon the world and found it good.

But the idyl had to end, as idyls will, alas, and on the ninth day the lovers, after a lingering, fond *adieu* to the wastes that had bloomed as the rose for them, came to Moose Factory just at dusk. Their approach was heralded by the challenging howls of a dozen Indian mongrels, and the huskies strutted through the gate, every bristle erect.

Bream's first impression was of the loom of long, solid log buildings against the cobalt sky — buildings whose windows showed the warm yellow of lamplight. Here and there sounded a voice of inquiry as to the disturbance; the cheerful smell of dinner permeated the air; now and then came a cold, dank breath from the mighty Moose that rushed swollen and ice-laden toward its wide mouth, muttering and clicking and grinding. All about was the gloom of forests, black against the near horizon.

Then a man appeared and halted them.

Eloise who, all day, had been in a fever of excitement and anticipation, answered his challenge and asked for Mr. Fraser, the missionary.

"He at dinner now," replied the man, with an Indian accent. "Tell me who are you, please, so I can tell factor."

Suddenly the girl gave a quick, glad cry. "Peter, it's you! Peter Rainy! Don't you know me — Eloise — Mr. Fraser's daughter? Oh, say you remember me, Peter!" She was half laughing, half crying, and the old Cree, recognizing her voice, held his lantern close to her face.

"Yes, yes!" he grunted. "Little missy!" And looked at her long. Then, turning the light on Bream: "And this your husband?"

"No," said Eloise reverently, "my husband is dead. This is Mr. Bream, who has brought me home." The two men gravely shook heads. "And how is every one — my mother and father?"

"Mrs. Fraser, she not so well," confessed Peter. "She not go to dinner to-night. Maybe you go home now, eh?"

"Oh, yes, yes," cried the girl eagerly. "And will you take Mr. Bream to quarters, Peter, and have the dogs looked after?"

"Yes, missy; this way, please, sir."

Eloise suddenly interrupted. "Mr. Bream, then I shall expect you after dinner?" And Dick, acting a prearranged rôle, replied: "Yes, you may expect me."

* Rainy gave the dogs into the charge of a young half-breed and conducted Bream to one of the bare, square chambers in the old barracks that were reserved for chance guests. Half an hour later, bathed, shaved, and dressed, he was guided to the dining-room in the factor's house.

The news of his arrival and something of the circumstances of it had preceded him, and he found the little world of Moose shaken to its foundations. Although the missionary had left the table hurriedly at the first rumor, Donald McTavish, the factor, McLean, his chief trader, Surrey, the doctor, their wives, and a few clerks waited upon Bream's appetite with Spartan fortitude and wilderness courtesy. But when, afterward, the port was brought, they tactfully demanded news, and listened eagerly, hungrily, to such of Eloise's story as she had decided he might tell.

And sitting there, good wine and old plate before him, noble English oak about him, a perfect man servant at his shoulder, and courtesy and good breeding in the very atmosphere, Bream began to understand the source of that mellow, old-world flavor that in Eloise had always so allured him.

When the fragrant Havanas had burned out at last, Bream was guided to the log rectory of the little church, strange, unanalyzable feelings working in him.

The missionary, a tall, gaunt, white-haired man in whose fine face zeal still glowed, greeted him with a hearty grip of the hand and words of gratitude for his journey. Mrs. Fraser, gentle, gray-haired, and sweet-faced, too pressed his hand, though she said little, and Bream could see that she had been weeping. After five minutes in their presence he recognized the rich heritage of gentle and splendid things that they had left to the woman he loved.

As the talk advanced he became aware that Eloise had already told much that had to be told and his task was made infinitely easier. Tactful, sympathetic, moist-eyed sometimes, with many a loving touch of their daughter's hand, they listened to what he had to say. And two hours later he left them reassured and happy, the picture of that primitive but blessed home life engraved forever on his memory.

Bream remained as the guest of the factor until the rivers were clear of ice. Then, joining a *brigade* of men returning to civi-

lization, he hurried south to the care of his business.

Owing to the swiftness of the break-up, the spring freshets were high that year, and when he reached Abimoming his drive had been in three days. Immediately he lost himself in work, and, when mill matters had been disposed of, spent the summer buying land above the Y, laying out two new camps, and overseeing a matter of building going forward in Abimoming.

On September 1 the Rev. W. A. Fraser and his wife, relieved from duty after thirty years of active service in the missionary field, and accompanied by Eloise, started south by Hudson Bay Company's canoes for Montreal, where they arrived about the end of the month. They were met by a boyish, bronzed giant who was the picture of health and happiness and who carried in his inside pocket a marriage license and a complete directory of the city churches.

After a brief fortnight devoted to that particular form of delay known as assembling a *trousseau*, the lovers were married by the Rev. Mr. Fraser himself in a beautiful, secluded, ivy-covered chapel, and one long journey ended as another longer one began.

THE END

NEXT MONTH'S NOVEL.—Next month—July—we shall give you a great feast in a fine long book, complete:

THE SHOP-GIRL

BY C. N. AND A. M. WILLIAMSON

AUTHORS OF "THE LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR," ETC.

Is there any class distinction in the gentle passion? May the very rich son of a successful sire turn a deaf ear to the harmonies of the heart? Can the poor girl, possessing only sweetness of disposition and the divine inheritance of beauty, spurn the proffered affection of one who appears, because of the possession of the world's favors, to be out of her reach?

What a vast chasm lies between riches and poverty! How many men and women, divided by conditions, have gazed wearily across the gulf, yearning for the unattainable, desiring with no hope of reward, and turning away at last unaware that in reality there was no space between!

The authors of "The Shop-Girl," who have mastered the art of story-telling, have come to the rescue in their full book-length novel with an expedient that serves to reconcile not only the reader, but all other interests as well, and with a deft hand have pulled aside the curtain that obscures the to-morrow of love's young dream.

How vast the plot that surges within extended arms! What a wealth of incident and drama and adventure and romance is catalogued between the two words "yes" and "no"!

This magazine is issued and on sale at all news stands on the 20th of the month preceding the date it bears